THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

MARCH, 1922.

Leda

By Muriel Stuart

Do you remember, Leda?

THERE are those who love, to whom Love brings
Great gladness: such thing have not I.
Love looks and has no mercy, brings
Long doom to others. Such was I.
Heart-breaking hand upon the lute
Touching one note only . . . such were you.
Who shall play now upon that lute
Long last made musical by you?
Sharp bird-beak in the swelling fruit,
Blind frost upon the eyes of flowers,
Who shall now praise the shrivelled fruit,
Or lift the eyelids of those flowers?

I dare not watch that hidden pool,
Nor see the wild bird's sudden wing
Lifting the wide, brown, shaken pool.
But round me falls that secret wing,
And in the sharp, perverse, sweet pain
That is half-terror and half-bliss,
My withered hands are curled on pain
That were so wide once after bliss.
And gold is springing in my hair
As my thoughts spring and flower with it,
Though I sit hid in my grey hair,
Without love or the pain of it.

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Yet, oh my Swan, if love have wings,
As the gods tell us, you were love
Who took and broke me with those wings.
I, weak, and being far gone in love
Let blushless things be breathed and done—
Things flowered out now in bitter fruit,
That once done are no more undone
Than last year's frost and last year's fruit.

For what has come of love and me
Who knew the first joy that loving is?
Where has love led and beckoned me
But to the end where nothing is?
I have seen my blood beat out again
Red in the hands of all my line,
My sin has swelled and flowered again
Corrupt and fierce through Sparta's line.
Bred through me—bred through delicate hands
And wandering eyes and wanton lips
Sighing after strange flesh as sighed these lips,
Straying after new sin as strayed these hands.
Mother of Helen! She whose breasts
To new desires unshaped the world,
Above Troy's summits towered these breasts—
Helen who wantoned with the world!
Helen is dead (she had love enough
To laugh at doom and mock at shrine),
And Clytemnestra, quiet enough
To-night beneath Apollo's shrine.
And I am left, the source, the spring
Of all their madness. They are dead
While I still sit here, the old spring
That fouled them flows above the dead.

But I have paid. I have borne enough,
I am very old in love and woe.
For all souls these things are enough—
Who have known love are the friends of woe.
There are those who love, and who escape,
There are those who love and do not die.
I loved, and there was no escape,
Long since I died and daily die.

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And death alone makes hate and love
Friends with each other and with sleep . . .
All's quiet here that once was love,
This that is left belongs to sleep.

Wireless

By Robert Haven Schauffler

Oh we are close indeed,
Yet do not touch;
Our bodies have no need
For even so much
As the most delicate caress of finger-tips
To be aware that our souls' lips
Are pressing each on each,—
Though not too wildly one for murmured speech.

With bodies yet aloof we feel the spark
Of the swift current leap from hand to hand
Without a touch, and make the other understand.
From spirit's arc it leaps to spirit's arc,
More potent, far, than the mere lust
Of dust for carnal dust.
For, dearest, we are two of the thrice blessed few
Who thrive on heaven's dole,—
Strong, vivid bodies drenched with soul,
Even as with mountain dew
Are drenched the fragrant fleeces of many a dawn
flushed ewe.

And now as we draw nearer
So that this warm hand lingers
Lightly upon your sweet smooth fingers,
My vision of the very *you* grows clearer,
More human, dearer.
With reverent surprise,
Through spirit-quickened eyes,
I read the page of you

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As if my hand, divorced from my own will,
Impelled by some unearthly thrill,
Were setting down the music of your soul
Upon a dim, ethereal scroll
Unseen by mortals hitherto. . . .

Give me your lips; the soul has claimed its part.
Now—heart to heart!

Phantasy

By Ethel Archer

(Introduction)

I WANDERED out at dew-fall,
And alone
Heard the soft-soughing of the dusk-clad pines
Sink to a shuddering whisper;
Till anon,
The blue-cowled lightning struck the quivering shade,
Waking the thousand images of Eld
That slumbered.
Weirdly-wise
Troop they un-numbered from the listening dells
Of snake-infested silence.
Charmèd bells
Tinkle a wondrous music as they go
Like to the frozen
Melody that wells
From the thin-reeded river.
Joyous elves
Dance with abandon in the cumbrous shade
Of monstrous gnomes,
(Whose lurching gait they mimic,)
Whilst there swells
A changeless, changing rhythm
Wherein dwells
Recurring ever, (as the faëry spells
Got of long ages,)
One frail glass-like note.

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PHANTASY

Across the forest carpeted with pine,
Within the shadow of the mighty elms,
The strange sound drew me, till,
Crouched in the hollow of an old, old oak,
Found I an agèd Pan,
Playing upon a pipe of river reeds.
His long beard blew
Over his fingers, as their magic drew
The old enchantment; till the dryads ran
Laughing, to meet him; and the elfin crew,
Hid i' the branches, mischief great did plan.

The lucid mantle of the large-eyed moon
Lay in its golden glamour over all.
How daintily they let the fir-cones fall!
Laughing to see them roll, as children do,
And all the while the magic murmur grew,
For Pan was merry on this night of June!

Into the forest stepping silently,
Came haughty ladies from a Court long dead,
Talking in dulcet tones to lords who bled
Years since in battle, duel, or some fray
Wrought by the amorous God. How blithely gay
Seems now their converse, tripping jauntily,
Now falling sadly, as the music strays
In softer mood, even as the player plays.

For Pan they see not though the fairy glade
Throng with his followers. Their stiff brocade
Rustles no louder though some winsome sprite
Lurk in the folds, who laughing tries to bite
The coral ear wherefrom some jewel weighs,
Stirring to envy all his heart's delight.

They know not whence that sylvan music springs,
Touching the triple chord of ecstasy;
Nor yet the passing memory it brings,
Fraught with the soul of all the woodland things
Born in the night.

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They only feel the subtle sorcery
Of summer madness, when the tangled hair
Of some bright nymph has caught them unaware,
Adding her kisses to the dimpled breeze,
Laughing to Pan deep hid within the trees,
Still playing, playing, to the summer air.

O magic night of love and Secrecy!
Soft stars are trailing through the amber dusk,
A nameless mystery surrounds the husk
Of life new-breaking. O the sapphire sea
Pearled with its foam of stars!
The crystal key
Whereof who holds, knows not Life's anarchy.

I watched from out the shadows warily,
And marked the passing pageant as it flowed
In rhythmic wonder down the winding road:
The darkened forest—monstrous effigy
Of Simian dwarfs with twisted limbs, that flee
The moving shadows—till the darkness grows
One phosphor flame more frail than elfin snows,
Wherein I founder. Swiftly, silently,
The dream clouds o'er me, as a limpid sea
Of gloom-voiced laughter, echoing eerily,
Fades in the distance. Endlessly it flows,
This strange procession, as some spiral goes,
And I must follow, whither no man knows!

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Tchehov

By M. P. Willcocks

WHY am I reminded of Tchehov when I catch the scent of a passing cigar on a frosty outdoor night? Why, when a greengrocer tells me that if he shuts his shop-door he loses half his day's customers, or when I long to see the deserts or the steppes, do I think again of the author of *Uncle Vanya*? Is it not that life is but a series of sensations; that the greengrocer has learnt how easily people are turned from their purpose; and that in thinking of all the places I might have seen—and haven't—I recognise myself as one of those *Three Sisters* who never packed a bag and got into the train for Moscow? For it is about such things as these that Tchehov tells us.

In one of his letters he describes how he used to sit on the edge of the pond at Melihovo to watch the shoals of little fishes in it. It is the little fishes that Tchehov loves, and, since group psychology is his special business, he perceives them most vividly in shoal formation, as it were. Let him get hold of a family or a set of cronies and instantly one breathes with him the crony or the family air. And, since we are for the most part little fishes who swim in shoals, it is pleasant to feel ourselves among intimates who cannot possibly give themselves airs. To see Tchehov at work is to watch the cutting open of a pomegranate, so drab is the plain exterior of his typical group, so cunningly packed are the seeds within. Each seed, too, is alive, so that he provides a refuge from one of the great horrors of existence, the dread of swarming, multiplying human life. A man standing on the steps of the Mansion House may well feel, in certain moods, as though he were gazing into a toad-pit: the ever-moving, never-ending mass below produces giddiness and nausea. In Tchehov is the cure for this sensation, for does he not show that each unit of the horde is the centre of a psychic world, that each body is kept sweet by the life-breath? For to this man the leaves in the human forest, the drops in the human ocean, are not only alive, but full of secrets which they share with him.

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This revelation of life in the ocean, in the forest of existence, is Tchehov's contribution to modern art. His work is like that of the scientist who, by plumbing the depths of the atomic world, finds there mysterious life: dense matter, like dense character, dissolves before the insight of the modern seer. Diving into the ocean of consciousness that is all about him, Tchehov feels the eddies and currents of it: this " grouping " that is so characteristic of him and so strange, considering his flashlight method, comes to him apparently from the mere spirit of the time, from the inspiration of the new communal instinct.

Yet, free swimmer as he is in the sea of feeling, Tchehov is by no means concerned with any theories as to the whence and whither of this ocean of life. To him its tides are but tides, forces that beat the shores according to rhythmic law, yet forces which ask no questions about what they have to do. When you ask of Tchehov what is the purpose of the show, or what is our precise place in it, he replies, " The devil himself could not make head or tail of it." In fact, his most characteristic phrase, when asked to account for the milk in the coconut, is just " The devil knows." Quite definitely he says: " It is time that writers, especially those who are artists, recognised that there is no making out anything in this world, as once Socrates recognised it, and Voltaire too." This attitude of mind is such an enormous relief that one can foresee for Tchehov a great popularity—as soon as people become intelligent enough to distinguish the more delicate shades in the rainbow of art.

In *The Cherry Orchard*, in *The Three Sisters*, and in dozens of the tales we find just a group of people circling round and round, like goldfish in a bowl, saying always, " I can't get out, I can't get out." The invocation which called these fools into a circle is a self-suggested attitude of mind. For they are not in a bowl, like the goldfish, they are in a cage—and the door is open. Yet they can't get out, because they think they can't. But this is everybody's secret. It is the secret of Europe's dominion of fear to-day, as well as the secret of the man behind the counter, of the woman in the house. Even so, this is not the end of the matter: there is a dream connected with this illusion of imprisonment, a dream of an unfulfilled promise of Heaven. It is the dream we trust and not the business.

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For do not the broken-down gentry in the *Cherry Orchard* refuse to throw off the burden of debt? Do not the three sisters refrain from going to Moscow because they feel, very deep down in themselves, that it is better to keep a heaven in reserve? Shadowy trees, wrapped in a misty past that never was, or a Moscow under the light of romance, are far safer as happiness investments than brick-built villas or glittering mosques and plate-glass windows. It is better to dream of Bagdad than to go there: at least to some minds.

This is practically all the real wisdom that our sad old disillusioned race has reached—a distrust of realisation. De Valera, although he seems defeated, can still draw on the mental resources which are open only to those who trust to the absolute. No wonder there is silence at a Tchehov play, and then a sort of panic flutter as the curtain falls. For from these comedies of unbusinesslike folly one wades deep into subterranean rivers of the self within. Behind the laziness, behind the dream which is the camouflage of inertia, is the sense of exile. Behind it all is the beauty of a past—which never was, since each man cherishes a golden age of his own creation. This will be lost if the cherry orchard becomes a building plot. " Don't you hear voices——? Oh, it's awful, your orchard is terrible; and when in the evening or at night you walk through the orchard, then the old bark on the trees sheds a dim light and the old cherry-trees seem to be dreaming of all that was a hundred, two hundred years ago, and are oppressed by their heavy visions." It is an essential part of our trickery to see our fears inevitably bound up with that ancient beauty which is " gone away upon the wind." Tchehov's genius is like the warmth which brings out on a page of common writing the invisible tracery of a palimpsest, the palimpsest that is my soul and yours.

Yet this subtlety is not strenuous, is even restful. For Tchehov's " note " is to acquiesce in this temper of a man, as one who perceives that irresolution and lack of purpose are as comfortable as old slippers. It is only to such men as Lopakhin, who finds that " the only remarkable thing about the orchard is that it's very large," that inertia can appear annoying.

But the function of the bourgeois class is to breed

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Lopakhins. And do not the critics of Tchehov generally agree that what he painted in his characters was the mentality of a class that in Russia is passing away? Does he not look forward to the time when the businesslike Lopakhins will have displaced the easy dreamers? It is a doubtful conclusion: for when we look at middle-class England, can we honestly say that fear and inertia do really pass away with the ascendency of the bourgeoisie?

Meanwhile, pending the complete electrification of the mind of man, Tchehov offers us rest. For all the other great playwrights, from Shakespeare to Ibsen and Shaw, construct their plays according to a formula which requires that their characters shall strip themselves from the start as athletes do before a race. Such and such a curve each person in the story has to describe in order that the pattern of it may be fully traced by the time the curtain is rung down. But nobody ever strips in Tchehov, since nobody is aware of the need to run a race; at least nobody ever takes such an idea seriously, though several people go about with elaborate "programmes of action." But these are merely pastimes, and everyone knows it. No, in Tchehov each comfortable slipshod soul carries about with it all the customary expedients for avoiding definite action. Not one of these people has ever given a serious thought to the dreadful strenuousness, the awful get-up-and-git spirit of Shaw, who would have every one find out the exact job he has been set to perform by the inexorable Life Force and go instantly, like the window-cleaning boys in Dotheboys Hall, to do it on pain of damnation. Says Captain Shotover in *Heartbreak House*, "Learn your business as an Englishman—Navigation. Learn it and live, or leave it and be damned!"

There is the new gospel in a nutshell: the theory of the Life Force and each man's duty in regard to it. There is the new commandment as it commends itself to the clearest thinker of to-day, the new commandment—and the new hell. But Tchehov's people live in hell, the hell of purposelessness, and, like many of us, find it on the whole not so very intolerable. It is sometimes pleasant to hobnob with a devil of your own tastes. So, entirely freed from the Shavian obligation to carry out the commands of the Life Force, one can sit placidly cheek by jowl with

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Tchehov's folks. On the slightest provocation, or on none, Shaw is always ready to become cosmic in his views; Tchehov considers the cosmos inexplicable, or at any rate incomprehensible to human intelligence. One can enjoy him, therefore, as peacefully as one can Trollope, provided, of course, that one is bitten with a craze for taking one's pleasure subtly and can therefore get a thrill of unhome-like joy from the scent of wood-smoke and snow. In this atmosphere you will never find yourself hurried out of a warm, if ramshackle house, to view the dawn of a new age from the vantage-point of a windy mountain ledge. But this horrible thing any disciple of the Life Force may do to you at any moment. Tchehov himself had a sort of fear, apparently, that somebody might do it to him; or that the awful world force might somehow get him on its own account. He says, "I positively cannot live without visitors; when I am alone, for some reason I am frightened." By choice he swims among the surface shoals, but he knows the depths below depths that exist. The sea of life will never be mere glass to him.

We see the man himself more clearly than any of his Russian contemporaries; compared with the giants there is naturally far less to see. From his letters we know him as well as we do *The Darling* or the doctor in *Ward Number Six*. We see a quick man, doing things in dashes, composing a tale, treating a patient who has been stabbed in the stomach and plumped on his study floor, building, farming, gardening, taking a census, dashing to Sahalin and incidentally there numbering and talking to ten thousand people. Up at dawn, he enjoys the garden, though he has risen at one o'clock the night before to get down the "life" of a tale. He stays up every Easter night to hear the bells. That love of bells is very significant to anyone who knows how an ancient peal can grip the heart-strings with the memories of old things now forgotten—as we shall be forgotten. This man feels everything in flashes that sting his nerves. We have with him a sense of millions, as of a field full of folk, who only await his coming to rise to life for us. But in all this power to give life to wayside existences there is little or nothing of the power to build up type-forms that we find in Turgenev. Nor is there any of that taste for architectonics which creates a

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design, building from foundation-stone to steeple a monumental structure in the abstract world.

Tchehov's comments on the women of Turgenev are interesting in this connection. Of these he says: "Except for the old woman in *Fathers and Sons*—and the mothers as a rule—all Turgenev's girls and women are insufferable in their artificiality and—forgive my saying it—falsity. Liza and Elena are not Russian girls, but some sort of Pythian prophetesses, full of extravagant pretensions—when one thinks of Tolstoi's Anna Karenin all these young ladies of Turgenev's, with their seductive shoulders, fade away into nothing." Liza and Elena would seem false and unreal to the creator of the "darling," the wife, the witch, and the awful Jewess in *Mire*, because he knew nothing of the art which draws out of the essence of many women a living embodiment of the power which we call woman. Again, Tchehov had no use for women as creative forces; what he understood was the woman who serves the bed and board of a man. His apt phrase would be "that comfortable creature, woman," when woman, that is, is playing her part properly on the stage of life. And of course equally "that devil of a nuisance" when she isn't. Lisa and Elena are as caviare to him as would be a meal of honey and grapes to a man who longed for tripe and onions. The praise of Tolstoi's Anna comes from the same source, for Anna has passions, prejudices, and the charm of a domestic animal. Tchehov occasionally generalises about women, but always in homely fashion. He says of daughters when they judge their fathers that they are like sparrows, "you don't catch them with empty chaff." This would be quite comprehensible as a sentiment in the back parlour of a little shop.

For Tchehov was the grandson of a serf and had to work the serf out of himself. He had served in a shop and helped to support his family by manual toil. His art itself he derived partly from that old father whose passion was for conducting church choirs, but mainly from his mother and old nurse. These simple women supplied the form and matter for his work, the nurse by mysterious and terrible narratives, the mother by stories of the hard life of the serfs. Let this nurse have some of the credit for *The Black Monk*, and his mother, with her zeal for making

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people comfortable with food and drink, for *The Darling*. This natural origin of Tchehov's art gave him freedom from the intense agony, from the struggle to find the *mot juste*, of the great French masters, of a Flaubert or a Maupassant. They toiled like men beating out the shape of hammered iron in a furnace; Tchehov only had to fly true—true to the instincts of the heart. When once he saw the inner reality, all was right. Swallow-flights is the word for his art. He wrote as he lived, as he swam, and of sea-bathing he says, " It is so nice that when I got into the water I began to laugh for no reason at all."—So comes the vision of a human situation. The rest is but to make all clear, clear, clear.

That is his way, but he is not always free to follow it. Like Dostoevsky, like Tolstoi, he is sometimes held, pulled back, trammelled. One cry is his over and over again, because the human being is never at rest without a prick to kick against: " I should have liked to have been a free artist and nothing more." But it is not his sainthood, like Dostoevsky, nor the prophet's mantle as with Tolstoi, that holds him back from free artistry. It is nothing more or less than the obsession which tears at the heart of all the great moderns, so that, as artists, they are simply forced to "hunt two hares"; it is that ever-present sense of the misery of the world. This misery he is forced to see as a doctor in a land of recurring pestilence and famine. So he travels three thousand miles to inspect the convict station of Sahalin; he sends books to the schools there; he publishes reports of the terrible conditions; in a famine year he collects subscriptions to buy horses that in spring they may be distributed among the peasants for the sowing of the corn; he builds three schools and makes a high-road; in cholera time he takes charge, sole charge, of a section, and does it for nothing; he starts a public library at his native town; he makes plans for a People's Palace in Moscow, hunting the hare of philanthropy because nobody who is alive can be a free artist in Russia, or, for that matter, in Europe. Tchehov's supremely glorious definition of culture is that it makes the heart ache for what the eye does not see.

But in this country such rough order as is implied by roads, hospitals, libraries, and public relief has long been

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imposed by the efforts of that very middle class which Tchehov depicts with insidious irony. *Petit bourgeois* on his lips means much the same as it does on Lenin's. It means to Tchehov someone who has failed in the first duty of bourgeois man—the diffusion of comfort, first of his own and then that of his neighbours; and this last for the good bourgeois reason that, if your neighbour is fever-stricken, you or your children will catch fever. But this is exactly what the Russian bourgeois does not know—yet. Or did not in Tchehov's time. For this reason it is natural to ask: how would Tchehov have written had he been an Englishman?

Supposing, of course, that he succeeded in penetrating through the thick layers of surface insensitiveness with which we are in the habit of keeping ourselves from shocks, he would have found inertia, due to fear and the love of illusion, but an inertia capable of being vitalised by the threat of discomfort, of physical want. Englishmen may slack for a season, but let an Englishman once realise that he is "up against it" and he straightway finds his business sense. It is almost always not the business, but the dream that he forgoes. His life is therefore apt to be an engaging saunter on the edge of an abyss, varied with prompt "recoveries" at intervals. It is a bewildering process for a foreigner to watch, since it shows a man alternately alert and as sleepy as Rip van Winkle. It is not only the well-kept English home that testifies to our English love of comfort: far more eloquent in this way is the faculty we possess for building oubliettes in our souls, oubliettes which we seldom or never explore. This faculty of concealment must inevitably have clipped the wings of a Tchehov. It would, for instance, have made it impossible for an English professor to sense the agony of approaching death as the Russian professor does in that wonderful bit of realism, *The Dreary Story*. Nor would an Englishman ever confess, as does the hero in *The Duel*, the mortal longing which comes over a man when he thinks of—what he has not got. We, too, can feel, "I must run away—there to the North. To the pines and the mushrooms, to people and ideas"; but we know perfectly well that when we were in the North we wanted the South. We cannot so frankly yield ourselves to our moods. And so I shall never see

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the steppes or the deserts. Instead, I shall hug a bliss that's dim-descried because it's cheaper every way. My business faculty has seized the upper hand in me. I feel that the gentleman in *The Statue and the Bust* got more joy out of the lady by his rides than ever he would have by an elopement. This must be the final wisdom of Nirvana: when the souls come down to the edge of the river of birth and refuse to plunge in.

It may be that this is the final sentence of Tchehov's wisdom; but if so, he does not indicate it. He, indeed, since he is an artist first and foremost, indicates no philosophy at all. You confuse, he says, "two things, solving a problem and stating a problem correctly. It is only the second that is obligatory for the artist." It is this commandment which Tchehov actually obeys, realising, as he does, that for men whose business it is to observe life he is as necessary " as a star is to an astronomer." His boast is true, for he provides material. He is like a " medium " who colours no message that comes through with his own temperament. In his finest work he is pure white glass. When he tells a story of a woman with a passion for mothering a man, as in *The Darling*, he tells it without comment: it is his very lack of comment that makes the old lion, Tolstoi, stand ramping on his hind-legs, all afire to moralise and point a lesson. He can bleach a tale of primitive lust, as in *Mire*, till one forgets to realise that it is a man who tells it. More dispassionate reporting there could not be. If Tchehov is not a free artist, who is?

When one actually sees his art in all its naked simplicity one understands his saying that Dostoevsky's work is " over-pretentious," for the creator of the Karamazov brothers is one who must needs explore the many mansions of the divine, the diabolic, in man; but Tchehov's holy of holies is just the human body with its health and intelligence, its talent, inspiration, and love. He is for the daylight, no dweller among fever-dreams, a happy, active man who puts all his sadness into his books, pouring out his bitterness as did that scorpion which Ibsen kept on his desk. When he gets home after the failure of *The Seagull* Tchehov takes a dose of castor-oil and a cold bath. He is then ready to write another play.

Yet, after all, this freest of all free artists does not escape

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the question of direction, of the ultimate direction of art and life. Does he not say: "Let me remind you that the writers who, we say, are for all time or are simply good, and who intoxicate us, have one common and very important characteristic: they are all going towards something and are summoning you towards it too. . . . The best of them are realists and paint life as it is, but through every line's being soaked in the consciousness of an object you feel, besides life as it is, the life which ought to be, and that captivates you."

"Soaked in the consciousness of an object"; no words could more directly describe the peculiar quality of Tchehov's work. But this artist, who puts the question to the jury, resolutely refuses to pass sentence.

And then, once and once only, he suddenly puts down in plain words the religion of to-morrow as it is beginning to emerge in the minds of scientists and thinkers: "Modern culture is only the first beginning of work for a great future, work which will perhaps go on for tens of thousands of years, in order that man may, if only in the remote future, come to know the truth of the real God—that is not, I conjecture, by seeking in Dostoevsky, but by clear knowledge, as one knows twice two are four."

After all, there is no escape from the Life Force, not even for Tchehov. The only point in which he differs from Shaw is that he puts the truth of God forward by tens of thousands of years. It is the Englishman—or the Irishman—who gets down to brass tacks and describes this God here and now.

Even in the uttermost parts of the earth——

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Pomona's Babe

By A. E. Coppard

I.

JOHNNY FLYNN was then 17 years old. At that age you could not call him "boy" without vexing him, or "man" without causing him to blush—his teasing, ruddy and uproarious mother delighted to produce either or both of these manifestations, for her offspring was a pale, mild creature—but he had given a deal of thought to many manly questions. Marriage, for instance, was one of these. That was an institution he admired, but whose joys, whatever they were, he was not anxious to experience; its difficulties and disasters as ironically outlined by the widow Flynn were the subject of his grossest scepticism—scepticism in general being not the least prominent characteristic of Johnny Flynn.

Certainly his sister Pomona was not married; she was only sixteen, an age too early for such bliss; but all the same she was going to have a baby. He had quarrelled with his mother about that. He quarrelled with his mother about most things; she delighted in quarrels, they amused her very much; but on this occasion she was really very angry, or she pretended to be so—which was worse, much worse than the real thing.

The Flynns were poor people, quite poor, living in two top-floor rooms at the house of a shoemaker, also moderately poor, whose pelting and hammering of soles at evening were a durable grievance to Johnny. He was fond of the shoemaker, a kind, bulky, tall man of fifty, though he did not like the shoemaker's wife, as bulky as her husband, and as tall, but not kind to him or to anything except Johnny himself; nor did he like any of the other lodgers, of whom there were several, all without exception beyond the reach of affluence. The Flynn apartments afforded a bedroom in front for Mrs. Flynn and Pomona, a room where Johnny seldom intruded, never without a strained sense of sanctity similar to the feeling he experienced when

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entering an empty church, as he sometimes did. He slept in the other room, the living room, an arrangement that also annoyed him. He was easily annoyed, but he could never go to bed until mother and sister had retired, and for the same reason he had always to rise before they got up, an exasperating abuse of domestic privilege.

One night he had just slipped happily into his bed, and begun to read a book called *Rasselas*, which the odd-eyed man at the public library had commended to him, when his mother returned to the room, first tapping at the door, for Johnny was a prude, as she knew, not only from instinct and observation but from protests which had occasionally been addressed to her by the indignant boy. She came in now only half clad, in petticoat and stockinged feet, her arms quite bare. They were powerful arms, as they had need to be, for she was an ironer of linen at a laundry, but they were nice to look at, and sometimes Johnny liked looking at them, though he did not care for her to run about like that very often. Mrs. Flynn sat down at the foot of his couch and stared at her son.

"Johnny," she began steadily, but paused to rub her forehead with her thick white shiny fingers. "I don't know how to tell you, I'm sure, or what you'll say . . ." Johnny shook *Rasselas* rather impatiently, and heaved a protesting sigh. "I can't think," continued his mother, "no, I can't think that it's our Pomony, but there she is, and it's got to be done—I must tell you; besides, you're the only man in our family now, so it's only right for you, you see, and she's going to have a baby—our Pomony!"

The boy turned his face to the wall, although his mother was not looking at him—she was staring at that hole in the carpet near the fender. At last he said, "Humph! . . . well?" And as his mother did not say anything, he added, "What about it? I don't mind." Mrs. Flynn was horrified at his unconcern, or she pretended to be so; Johnny was never sure about the genuineness of her moods. It was most unfilial, but he was like that—so was Mrs. Flynn. Now she cried out, "You'll *have* to mind, there, you must. I can't take everything on my own shoulders. You're the only man left in our family now—you must, Johnny. What are we to do?"

He glared at the wallpaper a foot from his eyes. It had

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an unbearable pattern of blue but otherwise indescribable flowers; he had it in his mind to have some other pattern there—some day.

"Eh?" asked his mother sharply, striking the foot of the bed with her fist.

"Why . . . there's nothing to be done . . . now . . . I suppose." He was blushing furiously. "How did it happen—when will it be?"

"It's a man she knows. He got hold of her. His name is Stringer. Another two months about. Stringer. Hadn't you noticed anything? Everybody else has. You are a funny boy; can't make you out at all, Johnny, I can't make you out. Stringer his name is, but he shall pay dearly for it, and that's what I want you—to talk to you about. Of course, he denies of everything, they always do."

Mrs. Flynn sighed at this disgusting perfidy, brightening however when her son began to discuss the problem. But she talked so long, and he got so sleepy at last, that he was very glad when she went to bed again. Secretly she was both delighted and disappointed at his easy acceptance of her dreadful revelation; fearing a terrible outburst of anger, she had kept the knowledge from him for a long time. She was glad to escape that, it is true, but she rather hungered for some flashing reprobation of this unknown beast, this Stringer. She swore she would bring him to book, but she felt old and lonely, and Johnny was a strange son, not very virile. The mother had told Pomona terrifying prophetic tales of what Johnny would do, what he would be certain to do. He would, for instance, murder that Stringer and drive Pomony into the street; of course, he would. Yet here he was, quite calm about it, as if he almost liked it. Well, she had told him, she could do no more, she would leave it to him.

In the morning Johnny greeted his sister with tender affection, and at evening, having sent her to bed, he and his mother resumed their discussion.

"Do you know, mother," he said, "she is quite handsome; I never noticed it before."

Mrs. Flynn regarded him with desperation, and then informed him that his sister was an ugly, disgusting little trollop who ought to be birched.

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"No, no, you are wrong, mother, it's bad, but it's all right."

"You think you know more about such things than your own mother, I suppose." Mrs. Flynn sniffed and glared.

He said it to her gently: "Yes."

She produced a packet of notepaper and envelopes, "*The Monster Packet for a Penny*," all complete with a wisp of pink blotting paper and a penholder without a nib, which she had bought at the chandler's on her way home that evening, along with some sago and some hair oil for Johnny, whose stiff unruly hair provoked such spasms of rage in her bosom that she declared that she was "sick to death of it." On the supper table lay also a platter, a loaf, a basin of mustard pickle, and a plate with round lengths of cheese shaped like small candles.

"Devil blast him!" muttered Mrs. Flynn as she fetched from a cupboard shelf a sour-looking bottle labelled Writing Fluid, a dissolute pen, and requested Johnny to compose a letter to Stringer—devil blast him!—telling him of the plight of her daughter Pomona Flynn, about whom she desired him to know that she had already consulted her lawyers and the chief of police, and intimating that unless she heard from him satisfactory by the day after to-morrow the matter would pass out of her hands.

"That's no good, it's not the way," declared her son thoughtfully; Mrs. Flynn therefore sat humbly confronting him and awaited the result of his cogitations. Johnny was not a very robust youth, but he was growing fast now, since he had taken up with running; he was very fleet, so Mrs. Flynn understood, and had already won a silver-plated hot-water jug, which they used for the milk. But still he was thin and not tall, his dark hair was scattered; his white face was a nice face, thought Mrs. Flynn, very nice, only there was always something strange about his clothes. She couldn't help that now, but he had such queer fancies; there was no other boy in the street whose trousers were so baggy or of such a colour. His starched collars were all right, of course, beautifully white and shiny—she got them up herself, and they set his neck off nicely.

"All we need do," her son broke in, "is just tell him."

"Tell him?"

"Yes, just tell him about it—it's very unfortunate—and

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ask him to come and see you. I hope though," he paused, "I hope they won't want to go and get married."

"He ought to be made to, devil blast him!" cried Mrs. Flynn, "only she's frightened, she is; afraid of her mortal life of him! We don't want him here, neither; she says he's a nasty, horrible man."

Johnny sat dumb for some moments. Pomona was a day girl in service at a restaurant. Stringer was a clerk to an auctioneer. The figure of his pale little sister shrinking before a ruffian (whom he figured as a fat man with a red beard) startled and stung him.

"Besides," continued Mrs. Flynn, "he's just going to be married to some woman, some pretty judy, God help her . . . in fact, as like as not he's married to her already by now. No, I gave up that idea long ago, I did, before I told you, long ago."

"We can only tell him about Pomony, then, and ask him what he would like to do."

"What he would *like* to do—well, certainly!" protested the widow.

"And if he's a decent chap," continued Johnny serenely, "it will be all right, there won't be any difficulty. If he ain't, then we can do something else."

His mother was reluctant to concur, but the boy had his way. He sat with his elbows on the table, his head pressed in his hands, but he could not think out the things he wanted to say to this man. He would look up and stare around the room as if he were in a strange place, though it was not strange to him at all, for he had lived in it many years. There was not much furniture in the apartment, yet there was but little space in it. The big table was covered with American cloth, mottled and shiny. Two or three chairs full of age and discomfort stood upon a carpet that was full of holes and stains. There were some shelves in a recess, an engraving framed in maple of the Player Scene from *Hamlet*, and near by on the wall hung a gridiron, whose prongs were woven round with coloured wools and decorated with satin bows. Mrs. Flynn had a passion for vases, and two of these florid objects, bought at a fair, companioned a clock whose once snowy face had long since turned sallow because of the oil Mrs. Flynn had administered "to make it go properly."[2]

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But he could by no means think out this letter; his mother sat so patiently watching him that he asked her to go and sit in the other room. Then he sat on, sniffing, as if thinking with his nose, while the room began to smell of the smoking lamp. He was remembering how, years ago, when they were little children, he had seen Pomony in her nightgown and, angered with her for some petty reason, he had punched her on the side. Pomony had turned white, she could not speak, she could not breathe. He had been momentarily proud of that blow; it was a good blow, he had never hit another boy like that. But Pomony had fallen into a chair, her face tortured with pain, her eyes filled with tears that somehow would not fall. Then a fear seized him, horrible, piercing, frantic; she was dying, she would die, and there was nothing he could do to stop her! In passionate remorse and pity, he had flung himself before her, kissing her feet—they were small and beautiful, though not very clean—until at last he had felt Pomony's arms droop caressingly around him, and heard Pomony's voice speaking lovingly and forgivingly to him.

After a decent interval his mother returned to him.

"What are we going to do about *her*?" she asked. "She'll have to go away."

"Away! Do you mean go to a home? No, but why go away? I'm not ashamed; what is there to be ashamed of?"

"Who the deuce is going to look after her? You talk like a tom-fool—yes, you are," insisted Mrs. Flynn passionately. "I'm out all day from one week's end to the other. She can't be left alone and the people downstairs are none too civil about it, as it is. She'll have to go to the workhouse, that's all."

Johnny was aghast, indignant, and really angry. He would never, never consent to such a thing! Pomony! Into a workhouse! She should not, she should stop at home, here, like always, and have a nurse.

"Fool!" muttered his mother, with castigating scorn. "Where's the money for nurses and doctors to come from? I've got no money for such things."

"I'll get some!" declared Johnny hotly.

"Where?"

"I'll sell something."

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"What?"

"I'll save up."

"How?"

"And I'll borrow some."

"You'd better shut up now, or I'll knock your head off!" cried his mother. "Fidding and fadding about—you're daft!"

"She shan't go to any workhouse!"

"Fool!" repeated his mother, revealing her disgust at his hopeless imbecility.

"I tell you she shall not go there!" shouted the boy, stung into angry resentment by her contempt.

"She shall, she must."

"I say she shan't!"

"Oh, don't be such a blasted fool!" cried the distracted woman, rising from her chair.

Johnny sprang to his feet almost screaming, "You are the blasted fool—you, you!"

Mrs. Flynn seized a table knife and struck at her son's face with it. He leaped away in terror, his startled appearance, glaring eyes, and strained figure so affecting Mrs. Flynn that she dropped the knife, and, sinking into her chair, burst into peals of hysterical laughter. Recovering himself the boy hastened to the laughing woman. The maddening peals continued and increased, shocking him, unnerving him again; she was dying, she would die. His mother's laughter had always been harsh but delicious to him, it was so infectious; but this was demoniacal, it was horror.

"Oh, don't, don't, mother, don't!" he cried, fondling her and pressing her yelling face to his breast. But she pushed him fiercely away, and the terrifying laughter continued to sear his very soul until he could bear it no longer. He struck at her shoulders with clenched fist, and shook her frenziedly, frantically, crying:

"Stop it, stop, oh, stop it! She'll go mad! Stop it, stop!"

He was almost exhausted, when suddenly Pomona rushed into the room in her nightgown. Her long black hair tumbled in lovely locks about her pale face and her shoulders; her feet were bare.

"Oh, Johnny, what are you doing?" gasped his little

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pale sister Pomony, who seemed so suddenly, so unbelievably, turned into a woman. "Let her alone."

She pulled the boy away, fondling and soothing their distracted mother until Mrs. Flynn partially recovered.

"Come to bed now," commanded Pomona, and Mrs. Flynn thereupon, still giggling, followed her child. When he was alone, tremblingly Johnny turned down the lamp flame which had filled the room with smoky fumes. His glance rested upon the table knife; the room was silent and oppressive now. He glared at the picture of Hamlet, at the clock with the oily face, at the notepaper lying white upon the table. They had all turned into quivering semblances of the things they were; he was crying.

II.

A letter, indited in the way he desired, was posted by Johnny on his way to work next morning. He was clerk in the warehouse of a wholesale provision merchant, and he kept tally, in some underground cellars carpeted with sawdust, of hundreds of sacks of sugar and cereals, tubs of butter, of lard, of treacle, chests of tea, a regular promontory of cheeses, cases of candles, jam, starch, and knife polish, many of them stamped with the mysterious words "Factory Bulked." He did not like those words, they sounded ugly and their meaning was obscure. Sometimes he took the cheese-tasting implement from the foreman's bench, and, when no one was looking, pierced it into a fine Cheddar or Stilton, withdrawing it with a little cylinder of cheese lying like a small candle in the curved blade. Then he would bite off the piece of rind, restore it neatly to the body of the cheese, and drop the other candle-like piece into his pocket. Sometimes his pocket was so full of cheese that he was reluctant to approach the foreman, fearing he would smell it. He was very fond of cheese. All of them liked cheese

The Flynns waited several days for a reply to the letter but none came. Stringer did not seem to think it called for any reply. At the end of a week Johnny wrote again to his sister's seducer. Pomona had given up her situation at the restaurant; her brother was conspicuously and unfailingly tender to her. He saved what money he

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could, spent none upon himself, and brought home daily an orange or an egg for the girl. He wrote a third letter to the odious Stringer, not at all threateningly, but just invitingly, persuasively. And he waited, but waited in vain. Then in that underground cheese tunnel where he worked he began to plot an alternate course of action, and as time passed, bringing no recognition from Stringer, his plot began to crystallise and determine itself. It was nothing else than to murder the man; he would kill him, he had thought it out, it could be done. He would wait for him near Stringer's lodgings one dark night, and beat out his brains with a club. All that was necessary then would be to establish an *alibi*. For some days Johnny dwelt so gloatingly upon the details of this retribution that he forgot about the *alibi*. By this time he had accumulated from his mother—for he could never once bring himself to interrogate Pomona personally about her misfortune—sufficient description of Stringer to recognise him among a thousand, so he thought. It appeared that he was not a large man with a red beard, but a small man with glasses, spats, and a slight limp, who always attended a certain club of which he was the secretary at a certain hour on certain nights in each week. To Johnny's mind, the *alibi* was not merely important in itself, it was a romantic necessity. And it was so easy; it would be quite sufficient for Johnny to present himself at the public library, where he was fairly well known. The library was quite close to Stringer's lodgings and they, fortunately, were in a dark, quiet little street. He would borrow a book from the odd-eyed man in the reference department, retire to one of the inner study rooms, and at half-past seven creep out unseen, creep out, creep out with his thick stick, and wait by the house in that dark, quiet little street; it was very quiet, and it would be very dark; wait there for him all in the dark, just creep quietly out—and wait. But in order to get that *alibi* quite perfect he would have to take a friend with him to the library room, so that the friend could swear that he had really been there all the time, because it was just possible the odd-eyed man wouldn't be prepared to swear to it; he did not seem able to see very much, but it was hard to tell with people like that.

Johnny Flynn had not told any of his friends about his

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sister's misfortune; in time, time enough, they were bound to hear of it. Of all his friends he rejected the close ones, those of whom he was very fond, and chose a stupid lump of a fellow, massive and nasal, named Donald. Though awkward and fat, he had joined Johnny's running club; Johnny had trained him for his first race. But he had subjected Donald to such exhausting exercise, what with skipping, gymnastics, and tiring jaunts, that though his bulk disappeared his strength went with it; to Johnny's great chagrin he grew weak, and failed ignominiously in the race. Donald thereafter wisely rejected all offers of assistance and projected a training system of his own. For weeks he tramped miles into hilly country, in the heaviest of boots to the soles of which he had nailed some thick pads of lead. When he donned his light running shoes for his second race he displayed an agility and suppleness, a god-like ease, that won not only the race, but the admiration and envy of all the competitors. It was this dull, lumpish Donald that Johnny fixed upon to assist him. He was a great fool, and it would not matter if he did get himself into trouble. Even if he did Johnny could get him out again, by confessing to the police; so that was all right. He asked Donald to go to the library with him on a certain evening to read a book called *Rasselas*—it was a grand book, very exciting—and Donald said he would go. He did not propose to tell Donald of his homicidal intention; he would just sit him down in the library with *Rasselas*, while he himself sat at another table behind Donald, yes, behind him; even if Donald noticed him creeping out he would say he was only going to the counter to get another book. It was all quite clear, and safe. He would be able to creep out, creep out, rush up to the dark little street—yes, he would ask Donald for a piece of that lead and wrap it round the head of the stick—he would creep out, and in ten minutes or twenty he would be back in the library again asking for another book or sitting down by Donald as if he had not been outside the place, as if nothing had happened as far as he was concerned, nothing at all!

The few intervening days passed with vexing deliberation. Each night seemed the best of all possible nights for the deed, each hour that Stringer survived seemed a bad hour for the world. They were bad, slow hours for Johnny,

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but at last the day dawned, passed, darkness came, and the hour rushed upon him.

He took his stick and called for Donald.

"Can't come," said Donald, limping to the door in answer to Johnny's knock; "I been and hurt my leg."

For a moment Johnny was full of an inward silent blasphemy that flashed from a sudden tremendous hatred, but he said calmly:

"But still . . . no, you haven't . . . what have you hurt it for?"

Donald was not able to deal with such locution. He ignored it and said:

"My knee cap, my shin. Oo, come and have a look. We was mending a flue . . . it was the old man's wheelbarrow . . . Didn't I tell him of it neither!"

"Oh, you told him of it?"

Johnny listened to his friend's narration very abstractedly, and at last went off to the library by himself. As he walked away he was conscious of a great feeling of relief welling up in him. He could not get an *alibi* without Donald, not a sure one, so he would not be able to do anything to-night. He felt relieved, he whistled as he walked, he was happy again, but he went on to the library. He was going to rehearse the *alibi* by himself—that was the wise thing to do, of course—rehearse it, practise it; it would be perfect next week when Donald was better. So he did this. He got out a book from the odd-eyed man, who strangely enough was preoccupied and did not seem to recognise him. It was disconcerting, that; he specially wanted the man to notice him. He went into the study room rather uneasily. Ten minutes later he crept out unseen, carrying his stick—he had forgotten to ask Donald for the piece of lead—and was soon lurking in the shadow of the dark, quiet little street.

It was a perfect spot, there could not be a better place, not in the middle of a town. The house had an area entry through an iron gate; at the end of a brick pathway, over a coalplate, five or six stone steps led steeply up to a narrow front door with a brass letter box, a brass knocker, and a glazed fanlight painted "29." The windows, too, were narrow, and the whole house had a squeezed appearance. A church clock chimed eight strokes. Johnny began to

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wonder what he would do, what would happen, if Stringer were suddenly to come out of that gateway. Should he—would he—could he . . . ? And then the door at the top of the steps did open wide, and framed there in the lighted space young Flynn saw the figure of his own mother.

She came down the steps alone, and he followed her short, jerky footsteps secretly until she reached the well-lit part of the town, where he joined her. It was quite simple, she explained to him with an air of superior understanding; she had just paid Mr. Stringer a visit, waiting for letters from that humbug had made her "popped." Had he thought she would creep on her stomach and beg for a four-penny piece, when she could put him in jail if all were known, as she would, too, if it hadn't been for her children, poor little fatherless things? No, middling boxer, not that! So she had left off work early, had gone and caught him at his lodgings and taxed him with it. He denied of it, he was that cocky, it so mortified her, that she had snatched up the clock and thrown it at him. Yes, his own clock.

"But it was only a little one, though. He was frightened out of his life and run upstairs. Then his landlady came rushing in. I told her all about it, everything, and she was that 'popped' with him she give me the name and address of his feonx—their banns is been put up. She made him come downstairs and face me, and his face was as white as the driven snow, Johnny, it was. He was obliged to own up. The lady said to him, 'Whatever have you been at, Mr. Stringer?' she said to him. 'I can't believe it, knowing you for ten years; you must have forgot yourself.' Oh, a proper understanding it was," declared Mrs. Flynn, finally. "His lawyers are going to write to us and put everything in order; Duckle & Hoole, they are."

Again a great feeling of relief welled up in the boy's breast, as if, having been dragged into a horrible vortex, he had been marvellously cast free again.

The days that followed were blessedly tranquil, though Johnny was often smitten with awe at the thought of what he had contemplated. That fool, Donald, too, one evening insisted on accompanying him to the library where he spent an hour of baffled understanding over the pages of

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Rasselas. But the lawyers Duckle & Hoole aroused a tumult of hatred in Mrs. Flynn. They pared down her fond anticipations to the minimum; they put so much slight upon her family, and such a gentlemanly decorum and generous forbearance upon the behaviour of their client, Mr. Stringer, that she became inarticulate. When informed that that gentleman desired no intercourse whatsoever with any Flynn, or the offspring thereof, she became speechless. Shortly, Messrs. Duckle & Hoole begged to submit for her approval a draft agreement embodying their client's terms, one provision of which was that if the said Flynns violated the agreement by taking any proceedings against the said Stringer they should thereupon, *ipso facto* willy nilly or whatever, forfeit and pay unto him, the said Stringer, not by way of penalty but as damages, the sum of £100. Whereupon Mrs. Flynn recovered her speech and suffered a little tender irony to emerge.

The shoemaker, whose opinion upon this draft agreement was solicited, confessed himself as much baffled by its phraseology as he was indignant at its tenor and terms.

"That man," he declared solemnly to Johnny, "ought to have his brain knocked out"; and he conveyed by subtle intimations to the boy that that was the course he would favour were he himself standing in Johnny's shoes. "One dark night," he had roared, with a dreadful glare in his eyes, "with a neat heavy stick!"

The Flynns also consulted a cabman who lodged in the house. His legal qualifications appeared to lie in the fact that he had driven the private coach of a major-general whose son, now a fruit farmer in British Columbia, had once been entered for the Bar. The cabman was a very positive and informative cabman. "List and learn," he would say, "list and learn"; and he would regale Johnny, or anyone else, with an oration to which you might listen as hard as you liked but from which you could not learn. He was husky, with a thick red neck and the cheek bones of a horse. Having perused the agreement with one eye judiciously cocked, the other being screened by a drooping lid adorned with a glowing nodule, he carefully refolded the folios and returned them to the boy.

"Any judge—who was up to snuff—would impound that dockyment."

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"What's that?"

"They would impound it," repeated the cabman, smiling wryly.

"But what's 'impound it'? What for?"

"I tell you it would be impounded, that dockyment would," asseverated the cabman. Once more he took the papers from Johnny, opened them out, reflected upon them and returned them again without a word. Catechism notwithstanding, the oracle remained impregnable, mystifying.

The boy continued to save his pocket money. His mother went about her work with a grim air, having returned the draft agreement to the lawyers with an ungracious acceptance of the terms.

One April evening Johnny went home to an empty room. Pomona was out. He prepared his tea, and afterwards sat reading *Tales of a Grandfather*. That was a book if anybody wanted a book! When darkness came he descended the stairs to enquire of the shoemaker's wife about Pomony; he was anxious. The shoemaker's wife was absent, too, and it was late when she returned, accompanied by his mother.

Pomona's hour had come. They had taken her to the workhouse—only just in time—a little boy—they were both all right—he was an uncle!

His mother's deceit stupefied him; he felt shamed, deeply shamed; but after a while that same recognisable feeling of relief welled up in his breast and drenched him with satisfactions. After all, what could it matter where a person was born, or where one died, as long as you had your chance of growing up at all, and, if lucky, of growing up all right? But this babe had got to bear the whole burden of its father's misdeed, though; it had got to behave itself, or it would have to pay its father a hundred pounds as damages. Perhaps that was what that queer bit of poetry meant, "The child is father of the man."

His mother swore that they were very good and clean and kind at the workhouse, everything of the best and most expensive; there was nothing she would have liked better than to have gone there herself when Johnny and Pomony were born.

"And if ever I have any more," Mrs. Flynn sighed, but with profound conviction, "I will certainly go there."

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Johnny gave her half the packet of peppermints he had bought for Pomona. With some of his saved money he bought her a bottle of stout—she looked tired and sad—she was very fond of stout. The rest of the money he gave her for to buy Pomony something when she visited her. He would not go himself to visit her, not there. He spent the long intervening evenings at the library—the odd-eyed man had shown him a lovely book about birds. He was studying it. On Sundays, in the spring, he was going out to catch birds himself, out in the country, with a catapult. The cuckoo was a marvellous bird. So was a titlark. Donald Gower found a goatsucker's nest last year.

Then one day he ran from work all the way home, knowing Pomony would at last be there. He walked slowly up the street to recover his breath. He stepped up the stairs, humming quite casually, and tapped at the door of their room—he did not know why he tapped. He heard Pomony's voice calling him. A thinner, paler Pomony stood by the hearth, nursing a white-clothed bundle, the fat pink babe.

"Oh, my dear!" cried her ecstatic brother, "the beauty he is! What larks we'll have with him!"

He took Pomona into his arms, crushing the infant against her breast and his own. But she did not mind. She did not rebuke him, she even let him dandle her precious babe.

"Look, what is his name to be, Pomony? Let's call him Rasselas."

Pomona looked at him very doubtfully.

"Or would you like William Wallace, then, or Robert Bruce?"

"I shall call him Johnny," said Pomona.

"Oh, that's silly!" protested her brother. But Pomona was quite positive about this. He fancied there were tears in her eyes, she was always tender-hearted.

"I shall call him Johnny—Johnny Flynn."

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Married Women

In the Past—Enslaved
In the Present—Struggling
In the Future—Free

By Dr. Marie Stopes

I. In the Past.

In a world full of cant about "Nature," where parsons and the "pure" try to hinder every advance in the position of the mother based on her attempts to control her creative powers, preaching at her to follow "Nature," it is amazing that there appears to be no recognition of the fact that human motherhood, as compared with that of all other animals, is unique in its *un*naturalness. By this I do not mean the unnaturalness of civilisation—of life within the shelter of a house assisted by a variety of appliances of domestic and scientific use; I mean an "unnaturalness" much profounder and more ancient than any civilisation of which we know anything. Animal mothers are the "natural" standard to which our mothers are so often referred, *but* they all have one brood of offspring which grows up and is no longer a burden before another brood is born. Now it is a fact of supreme importance that a human mother is called upon to bear a fresh brood before she has reared the former ones. True, her broods are generally only one individual, but so are a mare's. No other living animal has so unnatural a task as to manage simultaneously a series of broods of all ages, but human mothers have had to do this for many thousands of years. We are so accustomed to this "unnatural" idea that we cannot even see what a strain it involves until the task is translated into terms of any truly natural motherhood.

Let us consider it in terms of seagulls, for instance, for no particular reason beyond the fact that last summer I was camping on a very wild cliff in Cornwall, and so became intimately acquainted with the domestic life of young seagulls and their parents. Great excitement in

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each *ménage* was caused by the first attempts at swimming, and the first lessons in balancing and flight absorbed both the parents, who were training one or two youngsters. Most of the seagull babies were " onlies," a few were twins, and it took the parents all their time to give the necessary instruction to the one or two. The frenzy into which the mother seagull would have been driven had she had to sit on one egg; to teach a fluffy youngster not to fall off the ledge of the rock; to go down to the sea with an older third and teach it to swim; and when there was a gale simultaneously to take a fourth and still older youngster for lessons in veering up against the wind, shows the impossibility of the task of unaided " unnatural " motherhood. Such illustrations could be indefinitely multiplied from the animal kingdom. In " natural " motherhood each brood, whether consisting of an only child or of half a dozen youngsters, is a *unit*, requiring the same kind of attention at any one time, and each is finished, done with, launched out in the world simultaneously, or nearly so, and *then the mother has a complete rest*, and is an individual. Her motherhood tasks accomplished, she flies, runs, or swims with her mate entirely free from the cares of maternity for a spell of individual life. Later on she starts another brood, which will in due course go through developmental experiences to which she can minister single-handed.

Translate this back into terms of human motherhood: The " natural " human family would be one brood reared until at least twelve years of age as an only child, or perhaps twins (possibly triplets), then sent adrift to fend for itself while the mother took a rest from maternity. The new baby might then begin after a year or two. How different from the unnatural family of eight youngsters of all ages under ten years old, which " pure prudes " call " natural " to-day. I can see the bewilderment on the faces of listeners to the various exhortations that women should have a " natural " family of a baby a year when they picture such a truly natural arrangement.

Briefly, then, I hope this demonstrates that human motherhood is not, cannot be, and never has been " natural " in the way that animal motherhood is. And therefore all the canting talk about women's duty to let

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" nature " have her way in ruling their motherhood is mere biassed babble. If one admits unique circumstances in any respect in human motherhood, then one must admit that any natural disadvantages incidental to the human type should be counteracted by other human qualities, and *the prime human quality is reason.*

The burden of a motherhood unregulated and uncontrolled is incredible! The cost to mothers of human life throughout the ages has been such a crushing, overwhelming mass of agonising suffering that the civilisations of the past and the civilisations of to-day rear like gaunt sepulchres built on the bleeding hearts and the crushed, frail bodies of " common women." A few " ladies " have had unalloyed joy in motherhood, a few healthy peasants have been as happy as animals, but myriads have been martyred.

In the past, women have been enslaved through their motherhood in all races and in all times with very few exceptions. In the immediate past (and by " immediate " I mean anything up to a couple of thousand years or so) has the enslavement of the wife and mother been good for the community?

To a certain extent, in the days of dim ignorance, it was inevitable, and to enable the race to pass through certain phases of evolution it has perhaps been invaluable. But in each civilisation there came a time when the enslavement of the married woman was the source of the disruption of the society which enslaved her. Look at ancient Greece and ancient Rome! Each reared by races proud, strong, beautiful, and wise, each fell because the " honoured " wives failed to produce a lasting replenishment of such individuals. Why? Within marriage was the enslavement and enforced dulness of vista-less domesticity. The interest, the excitement, the charm and grace of life were reserved by men for women outside the stronghold of marriage; the racial strength given by passionate love was lost. And married men, bored and irritated by wives who were deadened by a narrow domesticity, were driven individually to destroy the one safeguard and foundation of any race, *i.e.*, the sanctity of the home and the fidelity and passion of loving mates.

Again, in the Middle Ages the legal shackles and the

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physical disabilities of wifehood in an age of dark ignorance were so great that the keener, more independent, and more delightful women refused the slavery of marriage and flaunted as travelling nuns or rural abbesses, and in the home where stupidity tended to breed stupidity, dirt and disease destroyed the incessant stream of baby broods, so that to rear a couple of grown-up offspring most women bore the birth pangs of over a dozen infants.

The virgin queen of England, the great Elizabeth, wise beyond her sex, was contemporaneous with, if she did not actually encourage, some intellectual freedom and exercise of power on the part of women, but she was swiftly (and I say "swiftly" for science deals in years by the million) followed by the low-water mark of modern English womanhood, the period of the Georges. Then the married woman was completely enslaved; shorn of the right even to hold property and estates, once possessed; shorn of all rights in the fate of her own children if they were born in wedlock, yet driven into wedlock because women were denied any intellectual place or dignity in the ordinary ranks of society outside wedlock. Coerced by custom into marriage, once married the woman was the slave of her owner husband, who could demand of her at his will the *use* of her sex, without ever completing its true function; who had in his absolute power the use of all her property; and who possessed all the rights in the children of her body.

Under such conditions I marvel only that humanity persisted! No wonder that our race still shows the ugliness, the feebleness, and the degeneracy which are rampant all around us. For it must never be forgotten that within the body, impressed by the mind of the enslaved mothers, were created and fashioned all our faulty citizens. Divinely meek under the hardships ordained by "Providence," sighing but scarce revolting, women have borne the human race from the dim ages of unrecorded history through an infinite variety of enslavements down to the time of the immediate past, when they started in good earnest to struggle to be free.

(*To be continued.*)

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The Education Axe

By Ethel E. Froud

(General Secretary, National Union of Women Teachers)

THE preamble to the Education Act, 1918, is worthy of notice. It informs the interested that it is " An Act to make *further* provision with respect to education in England and Wales," and goes on to say, " Be it enacted, by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, as follows . . . " Then follow the fifty odd clauses of the Act to secure " the establishment of a *national* system of public education available for all persons capable of profiting thereby."

So, only a few short years ago the statesmen of this country saw that " further " education on a " national " scale was a necessity for " all persons capable of profiting thereby." Hence the Education Act, 1918. Yet, before the Geddes Committee was even appointed, many of the best provisions of the Act were already in abeyance by order of the Board of Education. All progress has been stopped, and if the Geddes axe now descends upon education it will fall upon a scheme already mutilated beyond recognition and from which the spirit has long since departed. Educationalists do not agree with those rough and ready economists who declare that all public services must share in the proposed " cuts." Whereas it is right and desirable that the Army and kindred services should speedily return to pre-war standards of expenditure, it is as obviously wrong that the services of Education and of Health should ever do so. Lord Haldane's amendment to the King's Speech, condemning the Government for failing to lay down principles discriminating between expenditure which might be reduced from that which is absolutely necessary to maintain and develop the efficiency

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of the nation, shows that at any rate he is alive to the position. So are those who defeated the amendment.

One must be entirely devoid of imagination if one has not long ago perceived that, under the plea of economy, a dead set is being made at popular education by those people who " make profit out of crippled minds," as someone so aptly remarked recently. Said an alderman on a county authority the other day, " What was the good of a perfect education to a man who had to carry sacks of corn or hold a plough? " while a member of the Geddes Committee expressed himself as of the opinion that " Education was an excellent thing, but there were limits to its economical usefulness." It is tragic that men with so materialistic an outlook should be in a position to tamper with the education of the country. Education is not, or should not be, the monopoly of any one class. Brains and talent certainly are not, and, whether found in the children of the rich or of the poor, should be given the fullest opportunity for development. What would be thought of a man who, having two eyes, always kept one closed, or, having two arms, strapped one to his side? And what would be the fate of a modern Government who attempted to impose such a physical handicap upon the people? The signs are that parents are fast realising that a very real intellectual handicap is being placed upon their children by the refusal of the Government to bring into operation the Act of 1918.

One of the *new* provisions of the Education Act conferred powers upon Local Authorities for establishing nursery schools. This admirable scheme for dealing with children in congested areas has already been abandoned, and there are people now agitating for the exclusion of all children under six. Home may doubtless be the best place for little children, given favourable circumstances there, but where the mother is cook, as well as washerwoman, housemaid and nurse, there does not seem to be left much time for her to watch and train her little ones. In such cases the mental and moral training and physical welfare which are afforded in the nursery school, during these impressionable years, form the soundest and most economical preparation for the school life to follow. Working-class mothers are indignant when they are told that their

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children may not be admitted at school until they are six years of age. Happily these women are now voters and will be heard on the matter.

Another section of the Act which has been abandoned is that dealing with Continuation Schools. It was not the most generous provision for children over 14 that could have been devised, but it was accepted as an instalment of better things to come. The desire for continued education in some form is very widespread. The disappointment of children at not being able to proceed to higher education is painful to witness. They realise that a door is closing to them for ever and that nothing can afterwards make up for this lost opportunity. What are we, as a nation, to do with the young adolescents? We can turn them into the street to become undesirable members of the community; we can send them into the overcrowded labour market to undercut adult workers or to follow blind-alley occupations; or we can, while their minds are still plastic, continue their education and so give them a real chance of becoming intelligent, useful, and happy citizens. The third plan is the sanest and most economical in the long run. Mr. Fisher has announced his " most profound belief in the value of Day Continuation Classes, more especially in the poorer urban districts." Yet the Day Continuation School has received its deathblow. Germany, America, Canada, Switzerland, Denmark, and Finland have all established Continuation Schools, and when Strasburg was handed over to the French the proposal to close the German Continuation Schools in that town was met with such stern opposition that the French were obliged to allow them to remain open. Japan has an excellent system of education, and China, it is understood, contemplates establishing continuation schools based on the scheme abandoned by London.

If the reactionaries who are bent on destroying the Education Act have their way, we shall soon be the worst educated people in the world. Imagine a national scheme of education which permits three-quarters of its future citizens to conclude their education at the age of 14! It is a known fact that when the child's physical growth is at its maximum the mental growth is at a minimum. Yet

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these are the very years (11-13) at which we have been trying to " cram " the children in the primary schools. On the other hand, when the physical growth begins to decline the mental growth reaches its maximum. This is usually between the ages of 14 to 18, and at 14, for the majority of children, all education ceases! Hence we see that a national system of education must include secondary education for all children able to profit by it. Somehow the idea is abroad that the children able to profit by secondary education belong to one class, while the children of a lower class need only an elementary education. Obviously this is a confusion of thought which is nevertheless a fixed one and due to quite apparent causes. " Elementary " and " secondary " education have nothing to do with distinctions of class, but to ordinary limitations of age and consequent capacity for learning. Under a really national system of education all children up to the age of 10 or 11 would go through the primary or first stage of education before passing on to the next or secondary stage of education. There are in our Secondary Schools to-day children as young as seven, and who are necessarily quite incapable of receiving a secondary education. These young children are occupying places that are needed for children of actual secondary school age, thousands of whom are unable to find accommodation, and so lose all chance of continued education.

One often hears the remark, " I pay fees for my child at the Secondary School, why should I pay rates and taxes for the children in the elementary schools? " It should be known that the fees paid by such parents only cover about 50 per cent. of the cost of the education provided. The other half is met by grants from the State and the County Councils, and in some cases by endowments. Fee-paying children in public secondary schools are dependent upon the community for part of their education and are, in fact, costing the State more than the children in the primary schools. Indeed, there is hardly an educated person in the country, whether he be University professor, shipping or railway magnate, director of education, or medical student, who does not directly owe some portion of his education to the State.

One hears that we are not getting anything like value for

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the vast sums spent on education. Has "education" in the past had a real chance, and have the sums expended been so vast as asersted? During the war it cost several millions of pounds per day to defend our shores and to defeat our enemies. At the same time we were spending an average of sevenpence per day per child on elementary education, and it must be remembered that that sevenpence included buildings, equipment, and upkeep, teachers' salaries and medical charges, and administration. The nation has had stupendous return for the paltry sevenpence per day that it expended upon the children in the schools. This was proved in that great testing time between 1914-18. Then, no praise was too extravagant to bestow upon the young men and women, products of our elementary and secondary schools, who rallied so wonderfully to the nation's need. Now, the old arguments as to the uselessness and extravagance of education are being trotted out again. Such people, however, do not show themselves prepared to withdraw their own children from school at the tender age of 14, knowing full well, in spite of protestations to the contrary, that education is a great asset in the battle of life. Education certainly costs more to-day than it did in 1914. This is partly due to the fact that we were not paying anything like sufficient before the war. Besides, everything costs more to-day, and if the nation cannot pay its education bill cheerfully it can, at least, begrudge it less than it does the increase on other commodities. For very decency's sake it cannot rob the children of education to pay for the war.

Already the children have suffered unduly because of war conditions. Staffs were depleted, and the teachers available were obliged to take charge of huge and unwieldy classes. Children were taught in relays in what was called a double shift system, and this in an atmosphere vitiated by the classes which preceded them. On hot summer days receptiveness was well-nigh impossible. Schools were often, as we think unnecessarily, commandeered, and the scholars were housed in buildings quite unsuitable for educational purposes. We hear that in 1922 some teachers and children still occupy these "temporary" buildings and that the double shift system continues in certain schools. Equipment was reduced very considerably, and it was sometimes quite impossible to get a proper

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supply of books, stationery and other apparatus, and many schools are not yet back to their pre-war standard. Can it be said that the children who have worked under these distressing conditions have had a fair educational chance? No honest person can say they have. Everywhere there is need for spending money on improvements in order to bring conditions back to their former standards. It is not denied that there are well planned and generously equipped schools in the country. What is wanted is that less favoured schools should be brought up to the best standards, not a general levelling down. The only talk of levelling up is in connection with large classes. This is a deplorable proposal, and if carried into effect will be disastrous to teachers and children alike. Progressive authorities have consistently tried to reduce the size of classes, realising that no teacher can possibly " teach " 60 children. Under the L.C.C. there are even now some five thousand classes where the children in charge of one teacher number between 50 and 60, and there are hundreds of classes in the country each containing over 60 scholars. How can " education " be carried on under such conditions? Because these bad traditions have survived from the past the proposal now is that all classes should be enlarged, and yet the country needs, as never before, intelligent citizens and efficient workers. Crowded together in huge classes, rushed through the schools by the age of 14, and then out into the labour market. What a prospect for millions of our future citizens! There can be but one end to such a policy. We are asked to submit to economies in education on the ground of patriotism, but true patriotism compels us to see to it that the youth of our land is not robbed mentally and physically, and so incapacitated for the battle of life and for competition with foreign peoples. If this deliberate betrayal is carried through, a day of bitter reckoning will inevitably follow. Sooner or later the people will realise the enormity of the crime that is causing this country to fall behind in the race for industrial and intellectual superiority, and then, when they find themselves tricked and helpless, they will do as other hopeless democracies have done before. So far as anything may, education will ensure the safety of the State, but ignorance will destroy it. The money for education must be found,

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for upon this service the well-being and efficiency of our people depend. Yet we find it stated that national expenditure on education has exceeded what the country can afford. We know that the prodigal son who spent his substance in riotous living could not afford the necessaries of life, and when we examine national expenditure we perceive why it is supposed that the country cannot afford education. The *increased* cost of the war services over the 1914 figures is £95,000,000 per annum, which is £10,500,000 more than the *total* cost of education. Eighteen millions should be saved on education, say the axemen, and yet we are spending £12,720,000 per annum in the Middle East. It needs but readjustment of our expenditure and we could afford education on a generous scale. London alone is asked to save £1,000,000 on its schools, but it will spend £4,500,000 on its County Hall. Are we, then, to economise on education merely to free money for expenditure in other directions? It would appear so. In 1914 we were spending 10 per cent. of our national income on education: we are now spending something like 5 per cent. The drink bill for 1921 was £400,000,000 (£11 per head of the population), and money spent on alcohol amounted to £180,000,000 (£5 per head). During that year it cost the country £9 19*s.* 9*d.* to keep a child at school in the country and £12 1*s.* 6*d.* in urban districts. It is nonsense to say that a country that can spend such huge sums on luxuries cannot afford education. If we *will* not afford it, then there is no future for our nation. We shall sink to the level of a subject people. Financiers, who are the chief opponents of expenditure on education, care nothing about the fate of this or any other race, since they are the real internationalists and money is their god. But all who love their country, and fervently desire that it shall take a leading place among the civilised peoples of the world, must compel the Government to give our children the best education possible, so that they may become able and *worthy* to help shape the future destinies of this land and to uphold its best traditions.

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THEATRE-CRAFT

Editors: Hermon Ould and Horace Shipp

Editorial

On January 21st the International Theatre Exhibition at Amsterdam was opened by Mr. Gordon Craig. The event was of the first importance to all those who take the Theatre seriously, and we are giving the whole of our space this month to it. A detailed examination of all the exhibits—a sort of *catalogue raisonné*—would be tedious and unprofitable, and we have preferred to discuss tendencies and achievements in the modern Theatre with particular reference to their exemplification in the exhibition.

In this note we may be allowed to thank Mr. H. Th. Wijdeveld, the secretary and organiser, whose unflagging enthusiasm made the exhibition possible. The town authorities placed nine large rooms of the Municipal Museum at the disposal of the organisation "Art for the People," under whose auspices the exhibition was held, and these were transformed by Mr. Wijdeveld, Mr. Frits Lensvelt, and an army of helpers (many from the art schools) into an ideal gallery, ingeniously lighted and decorated in the spirit of the newer developments in art.

The first room was devoted to the work of Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia; the second to the English exhibits; the third to the American; the fourth to work from Russia, Sweden, France, and Belgium; the fifth to Dutch; the sixth and seventh to German and Austrian; the eighth, a darkened room, contained lit-up models from many countries. The ninth room, which displayed a collection of books on the theatre from all over the world, was a lecture-hall. Lectures have been given by Gordon Craig, Jacques Copeau, and Oscar Strnad, and others have been arranged.

We take this opportunity of supporting the suggestion made in many quarters—notably in the *Manchester Guardian*—that the whole exhibition should be transferred to this country when Holland releases it. Mr. Martin Hardie, who was in Amsterdam as a representative of the Victoria and Albert Museum, is perhaps considering the possibility of taking the project under his wing?

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Concerning Gordon Craig

By Horace Shipp

THE first room at the Exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum is devoted to the work of the two men who may justly claim to be the pioneers of the new movement in our generation, Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia. The fact is interesting in that it gives us pause to consider the position which these two artists now occupy in " the theatre advancing," and to turn to their work with something of the same attention as we would give to a book of prophecies when events came to pass.

The Appia designs convey his mastery of form and stage space, but fail (because of the obvious limitations of pictorial art) to show what was really his contribution to theatre theory and practice—the continually evolving interpretation of the play by means of expressive lighting.

Craig's actual contribution is historic; the woodcuts of characters, three scene models, and the scene designs are not recent work, and this is a factor of importance when we are trying to form a just estimate of his position.

It has become a commonplace to grant that he has been and still is a tremendous influence on the art of the theatre; the difficulty of the situation is that this compliment to his influence savours of the proverbial " moral victory " accorded to defeated parties at elections. Other theatre workers are now coming into his own; he stands like Moses on Pisgah, seeing the promised land to which years of his leadership has brought them. For, in spite of contradictions, changing policies, inconsistencies, and waywardness, Craig has preached a dual doctrine of the theatre which is but now beginning to be accepted. In the first place he has demanded an art of the theatre which is more than a mere coming together of other arts; is, indeed, a thing apart, conditioned by its own peculiar medium and striving to perfect that medium by a synthetic conception of the subservient crafts. Alongside this he has held his other belief of the claims of subjectivity in the presentation of

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stage work. All his teaching and propaganda are rounded in these comprehensive fundamentals, his apparent vacillations retaining the curve when we take a broader view. Thus when he finds histrionics becoming aggressively important in the art of the theatre he throws the weight of his opinion against the actor; or when he finds drama degenerating to words and monopolising the theatre he carries on a campaign against the dramatist. I should not be surprised if Mr. Craig leaves Amsterdam breathing threatenings and slaughter against the decorator and stage-scenery, and banning these activities as aforetime he has banned those of the actor, the mechanician, the dramatists, the realists, and most other theatre workers in their turns. The art of the theatre is Mr. Craig's religion; complete loyalty to that art, an acceptance of the limits of one's personal contribution, and a wide knowledge of what is being done all over the world and what has been done in the past, these things constitute his morality. His æsthetic philosophy, that the " scenery " should constitute a continually expressive interpretation of the play motive, whereby changing form and light will convey to the mind through the eye what the words and music convey orally, has become a pronounced part of his creed.

In the advanced circles of the theatre this dual conception is now accepted. The Exhibition at Amsterdam shows the dawning conception of the art of the theatre for the reception of which every phase of theatrical craftsmanship, from the theatre building to the last detail of presentation, may be reconstituted. Moreover, the static scene, depicting the material environment of the play (treated either realistically or decoratively), tends to give place to *décor vivant* expressing the continually developing psychological background of the play.

Why then is Gordon Craig not in the forefront of the active theatre workers? It does not move us when his champions tell us of his productions at Kensington in 1903, of his work with Duse, of productions of Rodenbach's *Le Mirage*, or of Otway's *Venice Preserved*, or even of the Moscow *Hamlet*. The twenty one-man shows preceding 1913 leave us cold, nor are we thrilled by the now historic designs showing at Amsterdam. The date is 1922.

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If Mr. Craig is content to be an " influence " in the theatre, one whose encyclopædic knowledge and early work are at the disposal of active workers, we must accept his decision. But I ask leave to question his contentment. The record of his life is a record of charges of plagiarism, and counter-charges of impracticability. His detractors dismiss his exhibited work as Rembrandtesque etchings achieving results by pictorial space suggestion which could not be translated to the stage of any existing or conceivable theatre, or as woodcuts whose charm is confined to that medium; his intimates assure us of mechanical and other devices in his possession which would give the stage space the grandeur and the sets the plasticity hinted in the drawings. These difficulties and mysteries can be solved in but one way: by work in a theatre.

"The sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
Is the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin."

It is of no use sulkily refusing to work unless wonderful new theatre buildings and unlimited money are forthcoming; real faith asserts that successful ruling over one city will bring dominion over ten. It is of no purport to make prior conditions that everyone else shall give precedence; the hierarchy of art is a natural order in which the top is predestined for the best man. It avails not to stipulate that others shall not steal one's ideas; lesser men and even greater men will steal them in the service of the art of the theatre which we all serve, but the man who places that service before his egoism will rejoice that his contribution is being accepted and distributed, even though it be by theft. If he is a real creator he will get fresh ideas and allow them to be stolen too. The theatre is waiting for Craig to return to active work in it. His theories are beginning to win through; it is for him to see that somewhere, somehow he returns to practice. We hope Amsterdam will be his last look backwards.

We grow tired of the reiteration of what Gordon Craig did in nineteen hundred and something; we grow sceptical of what Mr. Craig will do when a perfectly equipped theatre, with efficient assistants and endowment complete, is placed in his hands. Gods are born in stables sometimes, and if there is no room in the inn . . .

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Amsterdam . . . and the Play

By Hermon Ould

A BACK wall; side walls with entrances; two " periaktoi," or triangular prisms, each side of which represented a different scene; painted curtains or boards thrust in front of the back wall to indicate changes of locality—these were the staple equipment of the ancient Greek theatre. To the Greek theatre we owe Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles. Early in the sixteenth century one Baldassare Penizzi invented " movable scenery," and until the tendency reached its apogee in Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree's productions at His Majesty's, the history of the theatre records a more and more slavish devotion to movable scenery and its corollaries of real rabbits, real camels, real water, real sand—real everything except real art.

Is it a mere coincidence that the drama, having in this country reached its high-water mark with Shakespeare, should have declined with disconcerting steadiness as the art of presenting it became more and more elaborate? Which of the plays written between the Restoration period and our own is worthy of revival, or, indeed, gets revived except for Court performances or by amateurs lured by the lengthy casts which enable them to give every member of their society a part? The play is ceasing to be " the thing," because producers have discovered that on the whole the public finds spectacles, stunts, pseudo-Eastern flapdoodle, and ingenious stage-tricks more amusing than literature. A producer, with the help of efficient carpenters, electricians, and painters, can put almost anything he likes on the stage. If he is staging a so-called " realistic " play, he can make the setting so realistic that it ceases actively to exist in the consciousness of the spectator; if he is staging a so-called " romantic " play, he can make the setting so entertaining that the play doesn't matter. The imagination of the audience in both cases is neglected.

The Greeks, the Mystery playwrights, the Elizabethans,

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and the Restorationists wrote for stages with the minimum of equipment: the result was literature. The Victorians, the Edwardians, wrote for stages with an ever-growing equipment: what was the result? Much rubbish and the "realistic" drama. The realistic drama was a necessary step in the progress towards emancipation from a materialistic conception of the theatre, and has many notable works to its credit. It brought us Galsworthy, Granville Barker, and Shaw—though Shaw is so little a realist that most of his plays could be produced by any of the new methods and gain in the process: Galsworthy and Barker generally need their carpentry. It brought us a large number of lesser playwrights, most of whom will pass with the passing of realism, but many of whom will find in literature a place which the theatre will deny them.

The Passing of Realism.

Realism, then, as a method has come to a dead end: it has no future. And it is significant that the Amsterdam Exhibition offers not a single example of realistic staging. The nearest approach to realism is to be found in the models of C. Lovat Fraser, who was able to design drawing-rooms which were at once delightful as colour-schemes and as drawing-rooms. Almost without exception the exhibitors choose for their subject plays which afford an opportunity for imaginative treatment. One passes from model to model, from design to design, and reads the labels with a growing conviction that there are only half a score of plays deemed worthy of consideration by most of these artists. Shakespeare claims the greater share of these: Wagner and Mozart (*The Magic Flute*) the rest. Here and there one finds a design for a ballet; here and there a design for a neglected play. Our own exhibitors (except Paul Nash, the only modernist among them) scorn anything later than *The Beggar's Opera*. The French know Shakespeare and Molière. The Dutch know Shakespeare and Maeterlinck. Austria knows Shakespeare. America is not so much concerned with Shakespeare; but I have no note of any setting for a play by a living author except Masefield's *The Faithful*. But in the German section quite a number of the new school of producers find suitable material in the new school of playwrights.

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One of the rooms of the International Theatre Exhibition, Amsterdam.

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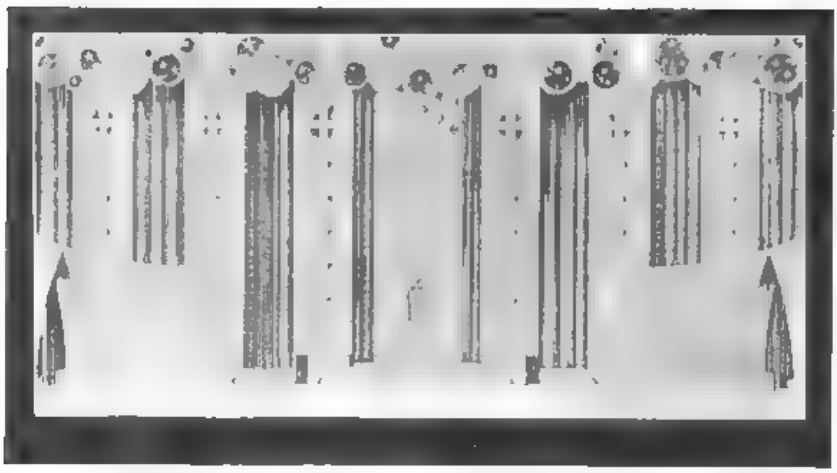

Decoration by H. Th. Wijdeveld
for a play of the Middle Ages.

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Setting for Œdipus Rex
by Frits Lensvelt.

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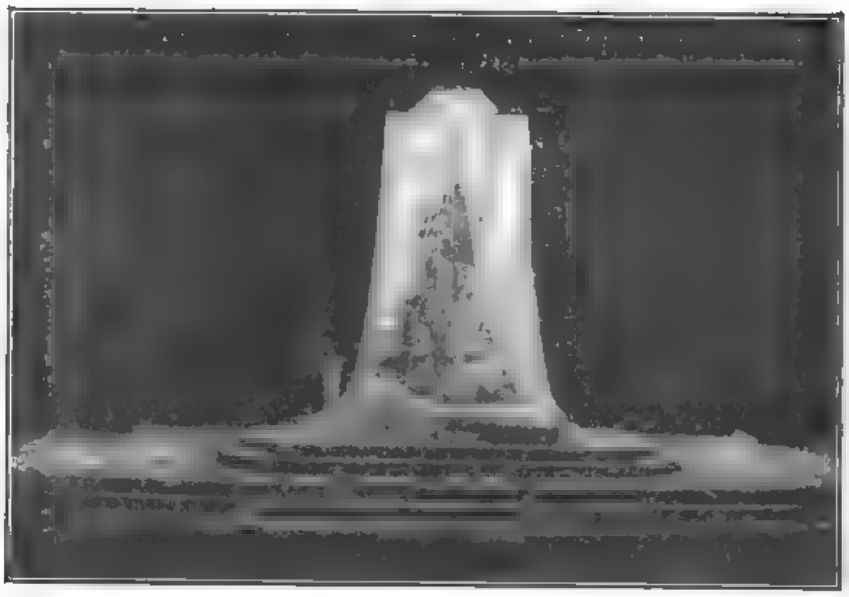

Setting for the last Act of Othello, designed by Emil Pirchan for Leopold Jessner's production at the Berlin State Theatre.

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What does it mean? That only the Germans are writing plays capable of imaginative production? The evidence points in that direction, and it points, also, to one other thing, which dictated the opening phrases of this article: The German stage has become a simple stage. An exhausted exchequer has had a salutary effect upon the art of the theatre in Germany. The need for economy has determined the baring of the stage until only the minimum of essentials remains. The resultant effect may have little in common with Greek austerity; but it seems to have brought the playwright back to the theatre, and, with him, " Expressionism."

The Coming of Expressionism.

There are two models by F. X. von Scherl for Georg Kaiser's *Gas*. One of them represents a plain yellow interior with a rectangular erection, built up of red cubes in the centre; nothing more. The other is a black interior, with bright red jagged spikes springing up in a staccato fashion in the foreground; nothing more. Without seeing the play in performance it is impossible to judge of the suitability of these settings; but it is not impossible to see that they are simplicity itself, that there is nothing which can hinder the development of the play, and that the second-mentioned is forceful and arresting as a design. Much the same may be said of Gudurian's drawings for Walter Hasenclever's *Der Sohn*, Wedekind's *Der König*, and Knut Hamsun's *Game of Life*, all of which have been conceived with that dual aim of simplicity and " expressionism " which distinguishes the German school from all others.

The modern plays just referred to are plays of revolt and disillusionment, raging with conflict. But the new method serves the more tranquil plays of yesterday equally well. Consider Ludwig Sievert's design for Act II., Scene 3, of a stylistic production of *Parsifal*. An uprising heath in the foreground, bearing on its crest a distorted and blasted tree—these in silhouette against a wild grev sky. If this is a true picture of the scene as produced, never can desolation have been more convincingly presented on the stage. It is true that this particular setting was designed some years before expressionism became a

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recognisable label, but it is faithful to the latest expressionist methods. Sievert was a forerunner who has kept pace with his followers, as his settings for Hebbel's *Judith* and for Kokoschka's *Orpheus and Eurydice* show. He, like they, must beware of a fatal tendency to coarseness. The bludgeoning method is not suitable to all plays—not, one would have thought, to *Judith*.

It is hardly necessary to say that Shakespeare has received the closest attention of the expressionists; and *Othello* has been the choice of two of the most notable designers. Emil Pirchan's design we reproduce in this number, and it will be seen how admirably its simplicity lends itself to rapid action. The same artist's setting for *Richard III.*, which we included in a previous issue, with its flight of blood-red stairs symbolising Richard's encarnadined path to the throne, is recalled by Julius Hay's design for *Othello*. In this, too, the stage is given up to a flight of stairs, black, surmounted by a gold daïs, the entrances being masked by flat screens of various single colours. The expressionist method of all methods can least be represented by " still " pictures, to use a term borrowed from cinematography. The essence of the method is that it expresses changing moods. One hesitates, therefore, either to praise or condemn " still " designs which may, in the working-out, prove better or worse than their promise. All that one can say about Julius Hay's drawings is that they are extremely attractive in the richness of their colour and in the satisfying simplicity of their planning. Whether they " work " remains, literally, to be seen.

American Work.

Outside Germany and Austria, America seems to be the only country not resisting the new broom which is sweeping both realist and decorator away. The realistic method still clings to Lee Simonson, the art director of the Theatre Guild of America, but he contrives to secure new effects by old means, and when he is dealing with a play like Masefield's *The Faithful*, he takes full advantage of the Oriental simplicity which the Japanese setting offers him. " Expressionism with a difference " may not unfitly describe the method of a young American, Mordecai

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Gozelik, whose name is unfamiliar to me. He exhibits drawings of settings for Tolstoy's *Powers of Darkness*, and side by side with them a scheme worked out in colours, shaped and localised to emphasise the development of the theme of the play. The scheme shows a sure instinct for the emotional value of colours, and, if workable, should prove unusually interesting.

Almost outside the range of theatre art are Mr. Norman Bel Geddes' designs for a stage for a theatrical presentation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Mr. Geddes has worked out his scheme with the utmost precision; a detailed plan of the enormous arena, flanked by a cyclorama, is exhibited together with a number of drawings of what the scenes enacted would look like. A wonderful sense of space, supernatural grandeur and religious feeling are conveyed by these drawings; and if the stage designed by Mr. Geddes is capable of producing these effects it is to be hoped that he will be given an opportunity of proving the faith which is in him. Probably the most interesting worker in the American theatre is Mr. Robert E. Jones. His work is not adequately represented in Amsterdam, but as an exhibition of his designs will be opened at the Dorien Leigh Gallery before this number of THE ENGLISH REVIEW is on sale, Londoners, at least, will have an opportunity of following Mr. Jones's work through its many phases. His expressionistic production of *Macbeth* was referred to last month, when we gave an example of his staging.

Dutch Decorators.

The Dutch workers in the theatre seem so far to have been little influenced by the activities of their nearest neighbours. Their characteristics are more akin to those of our own decorators. Careful workmanship, delicacy of conception and execution, and unimpeachable good taste mark them all. Dr. J. R. B. de Roos favours a treatment in which colours are used in flat, straight strips, with never a curve: they remind one ludicrously of Dutch tiles, but the result in his settings for Débussy's opera *Pelléas* and Ravel's *La Mère l'Oye* is decidedly pleasing. H. Th. Wijdeveld's *Hamlet* and Frits Lensvelt's *Twelfth Night* satisfy one's capacity for delight in pure line, carefully maintained poise and refined colour, and Herman

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Klopper's scheme for *The Yellow Jacket*, consisting chiefly of suggestively-designed screens and an attractive back-cloth, seems right for that play. We owe acknowledgments to *Wendigen*, the Dutch art magazine, for permission to reproduce the designs of Mr. Wijdeveld and Mr. Lensvelt. The Dutch, it seems, are decorators, with more affinity with the solids (almost architectural) of Norman Wilkinson and Lovat Fraser than the occasional arbitrary conventions of Albert Rutherston (one recalls Androcles' ravishing forest!). May I labour the point which determined the burden of this article and ask: "Where are the modern Dutch dramatists?" I can claim no special knowledge of Dutch dramatic literature, but judging by the playbills it would seem that the Dutch theatre is given over chiefly to foreign plays and to the works of the national Dutch poet, Vondel. The conclusion seems almost to be forced upon one that the modern spirit cannot be expressed in the terms of the decorator's art. Either the decorator or the playwright must go! And since the Drama is a less ephemeral art than the decorator's, it is perhaps not bad economics to plump for the playwright.

Home Thoughts.

Back in England, I find that people are less interested in the theatre as an art than as a speculation; and it appears to be a very bad speculation. One hears of losses on recent productions running into six figures. I am tempted to retort that it ought not to be possible, in these days of famine and the primary need for wise husbandry, to spend so much money on the production of a play, much less to lose it. How is the money spent? On inflated rents, over-paid "stars," over-elaborate scenery, dresses which cost £200 apiece and have constantly to be renewed, expensive inessentials of all kinds. There is hope that economic pressure may yet drive speculators in the theatre to the knowledge that the solution of their difficulties lies in simplification. Thus may art regain the place which tinsel has usurped.

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New Worlds and Nurseries

By Horace Shipp

It has been said that the artist creates either gods or toys, and the Amsterdam Exhibition reveals this as an active principle of contemporary stage-craft. Most of the frames or model prosceniums held delightful conceptions for settings or costumes, which, by their charm of colour, their reduction to simple forms, their appeal to our senses, were toys to please and amuse. Here and there, however, one came across something altogether greater—something which moved out of this realm of delightful fancy where puppets played at life, into wide places of the imagination, where mankind were at odds with the gods. There is an intermediate stage art aiming at expressing life in the settings and terms of life, and although it is that realistic phase of theatre work which has long held the theatre in England, the artists tend to leave its visual presentation to the stage carpenter and borrowed furniture.

At first glance it would seem that the play would dictate, that the literary conception would be reflected. But comparison of conflicting methods of presenting the same plays proves that the differentiation was more fundamental than that. Sievert's desolation scene for *Parsifal*, for example, held the elemental appeal, while that of Hans Wilderman for the same scene treated it as beautiful decoration. The same difference was noticeable in the treatment of certain Shakespearean plays. Lovat Fraser or Norman Wilkinson, Paul Shelving of Birmingham or Fauconnet of the Vieux Colombier, rendered Shakespeare as something exquisite; R. E. Jones (whose exhibition is now being held at the Dorien Leigh Galleries), or even such semi-realists as Gleise, conceived their scenes in titanic proportions.

In the theatre which is to be there must be room for both methods. At one time we want plays, action, and

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décor which will appeal to the senses, delighting, amusing or interesting us; at another we need the heroic conception.

At the dictates of this latter the actual living space of the theatre threatens to expand beyond the picture-frame stage to which we have grown accustomed. While such artists as Paul Nash, Pirchan, Mordecai Gozelik, Herman Rosse, and others can realise great conceptions within the limitations of the proscenium, there is expressed elsewhere a revolt against it. In the American section one was attracted by the massive designs of Ernest de Weerth. An obvious disciple of Craig, his scenes depend upon architectonic qualities which would need a stage considerably higher than the normal. Norman Bel Geddes, again, introduces the magnificent project for the presentation of the *Divine Comedy* with a design for the arena and cyclorama necessary for its presentation. The Dutch work also reveals a desire to make the theatre something nearer a temple architecturally, although when one turned to an examination of the actual stage work of Dutch artists there seemed a lack of the giantesque conception. Among the models was a fine design for the modern Dutch play, *De Paradys Floek*, by Adrian van Horst; it showed a cave among rocks, and pattern and a sense of majesty were achieved by an insistence upon the geological structure of the cliff. Both this, however, and H. Th. Wijdevelt's *Hamlet*, with its use of changing units within a low-arched proscenium, could have found expression in any ordinary theatre. The truly enormous theatre buildings which the Dutch architects propose remain their outstanding contribution to the art of the theatre.

In Germany the experimentalists are feeling out in every direction. While their decorators are creating again and again stage work which pleases and interests without making any deeper appeal, others are pioneering along new paths. The theatre building has always been regarded as pliable by the advanced German thinkers: Reinhardt's experiments in bringing the stage and audience together and of creating productions greater than the "peep-show" stage will accommodate, accounts for the Grosseschauspielhaus and the projected Festspielhaus at Salzburg. Ernst Stern's designs for productions under his management reveal bigness of conception, but are often

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defeated by their own eccentricity. In such sets as a grotesquely twisted *Don Giovanni* the artist's preoccupation with his own technique has brought the thing to earth by its perverseness. Perhaps the most important aspect of present-day German work is that, without making alterations in stage-space or depending upon the physically gigantesque, it often builds with just those objects which give free play to the superhuman elements of pure drama.

This higher note in theatre art, this desire for the expression of something less sensuous than decoration and more significant than realism, has so far not affected the designers of costume. Delightful though many of the drawings were, the exhibition was, to my mind, disappointing in this direction. Bakst as super-decorator stands supreme, and when one came across a portfolio of beautiful work by Snackenberg the Bakst influence was there. Our English decorators are excellent costume craftsmen, but we seek in vain for a new or a great note. The Russians, Larionow, Soudeikine, and Gontcharova, have experimented in simultanist and futurist costume, but I confess that, in spite of an interest in these phases of art, I cannot see how the designs would work out. Anyway, they move towards *naïveté* and not towards grandeur.

That is the difference which forced itself continually on my mind as I examined the work gathered at Amsterdam. On the one hand, the function of the theatre became a pleasing art of make-believe; on the other, it was a religion linking the human mind with cosmic forces. Happily, there is room for both toys and gods.

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THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

The World after Washington (i)*

By C. H. Douglas

THIS world is a testing ground for theories. When we say we understand what is going on in the world we mean that we can, or think we can, relate the facts, as we see them, to some theory into which they fit, and from which as a logical consequence we can predict the emergence of further facts not for the moment visible, much as the finding of a preposterous Homburg hat on a fragment of a political jigsaw puzzle stimulates us to a search for other salient characteristics of Mr. Winston Churchill. Which is the method of Modern Scientific progress.

Now, the validity of this method depends on due recognition of the fact that theories of themselves have no value; that is to say, a fact which will not fit a theory is still a good fact, but a theory which will not explain or fit the facts is a bad theory. It is the purpose of this article to show that the actions of the responsible Governments of this planet are taken in accordance with a theory which is a bad theory, to which the facts of life do not fit, and from which actions, in consequence, come results which are not in accordance, either with the theory, or, to be charitable, the expectations of those statesmen from whose deliberations they proceed.

This theory, although transcending all the bounds of what is commonly called theology, is most easily epigrammatised under the title of the Doctrine of Original Sin. It assumes the existence of an ideal world, possibly a New Jerusalem, in which people would act, not merely differently, but from fundamentally different motives from those now at work in the world. It " judges " those motives, finds them " bad," and as a direct and logical

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consequence conceives the function of Government, using that term in the broadest possible sense, to be mainly to run and see what Johnny is doing, and tell him he mustn't. That is to say, it is Authoritarian.

The implications of this theory are almost endless, but it is sufficient for our purpose to examine its effect on the problems of War, Industry, and Social Revolution. War, considered in the light of the popular interpretation of it, arises out of a desire, a wicked desire, on the part of peoples, to fight each other. It is to be eliminated, if it can be eliminated, by the cultivation of " goodwill " between peoples (whatever that may mean), and by the concerted action of Governments to " regularise " the conflagration if and when it should break out. And so we have the Washington Conference.

But by no process of stretching can this explanation of War be made to fit the observed facts of the First World War. It is most improbable that one thousand persons in England, France, and Germany collectively, had they been asked, as individuals, would have agreed to walk out of their homes in August, 1914, and each, on his own responsibility, to start a personal fray with an opposing national. Modern war is only possible from the existence of a huge machine capable of overriding personal opinion, backed by an equally elaborate organisation for misdirecting and perverting it. Even by 1918, when half the world had sustained injuries at the hands of the other half, it required the most elaborately organised " hate " campaign that the world has ever known to carry public opinion in support of the measures deemed requisite by the omnibus term, " military necessity."

Nor is it fair to say that the average man in the street is such a natural born fool that after four and a half years of a war in which, as an individual, he was killed, maimed, broken in health and home, ruined financially, and—as very rich bankers like Lord Inchcape never tire of telling us—impoverished nationally, although a " winner," he requires safeguarding from a far worse war because of a widespread desire to repeat those experiences. Not a bit of it. There is a growing tendency to *acquiesce* in the inevitability of another war, because along with war came certain phenomena which can be collected under the

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term of economic prosperity. Close reasoning not being a conspicuous attribute of the man in the street, he assumes that peace and economic depression are necessarily inseparable.

Since Social Revolution indisputably has an economic basis, it is clear then that these three phenomena—War, Industrial Depression, and Social Revolution—are closely inter-connected. The most cursory examination of History will supply the necessary confirmation—every modern war has been preceded and followed by economic depression, and has been accompanied by economic prosperity, and the majority have involved attempts at Social Revolution.

Bearing this in mind, let us suppose for a moment, as a tentative hypothesis, that wars are caused, not by the wickedness of human nature, but by a desire for economic prosperity, a desire balked, not so much by natural as by artificial difficulties. It may be noted in passing that even this desire has been more or less successfully criticised—witness the astonishing acquiescence in the idea that our troubles arise from an Acquisitive motive in Society. The necessity, inherent in the Doctrine, of providing means to keep humanity in the strait and narrow way involves the existence of both a negative and positive mechanism —a machine for permitting human beings, on terms only, to achieve certain amenities, such as economic prosperity, on the one hand, and to prevent them from doing other things, by the imposition of active discomfort, on the other. The agency of the first is Finance, with its concomitant of Employment as the condition of bed, board and clothes; the agency of the second is Law.

Now, observe again that these agencies fail to pass the pragmatic test—they do not deliver the goods. It would be a bold man who would contend that human nature reached its highest exemplar in the self-made rich; and the decline of sheep-stealing, since that healthy and invigorating pastime ceased to be a hanging matter, is only paralleled by the increase in delirium tremens in America subsequent to the passing of the Prohibition amendment. Which brings us again, by easy stages. to Washington.

America is the modern citadel of the Doctrine—

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the G.H.Q. of Dollar Diplomacy, the home of moral uplift, the Blue Sunday, and the hit-don't-argue policeman. We have progressed ourselves a good deal in this direction lately, but not so that it would be noticed in Chicago. That the majority of American citizens, amongst whom are some of the kindliest souls in the world, detest these things, is, of course, quite beside the point—they have no more control over them than has the average Englishman over the price of petrol.

The real objective (towards which the Washington Conference was one move) is the stabilisation and centralisation of the present World Order of Finance and Law, and the Hegemony, or final, permanent, and indisputable control of that centralised Order by the Powers represented by Wall Street and Washington. That aim involves certain limited and preliminary objectives. It is obvious that a situation, such as would arise should the United States become involved in war with Japan on anything like equal terms, would leave the British Empire (which has developed a culture too tolerant for Doctrinal purposes) in somewhat the position in which America herself was left by the late-lamented war—relatively unexhausted and a creditor to all combatants, a position which would shift Financial World Power back to London. Utilising the financial power recently acquired, the combined movement, of which the Washington Conference was the visible symbol, drove a wedge into the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, reducing the naval armament question to a question of credit-power, *i.e.*, potential building capacity, rather than actual power, thus apparently eliminating, or at any rate greatly delaying, any possibility of distraction from the main objective, and, at the same time, forcing a settlement of the Irish question on lines which seem well calculated to eliminate Great Britain as an Atlantic Naval Power, while strengthening the hold of Finance on Ireland. Without offering an opinion as to whether the situation was inescapable, it may be remarked at once that President Harding is justified in his complacency. His term of office marks the bloodless surrender of the world's greatest Empire, and its deletion as an effective voice at other than parochial conferences. The British Government being wholly in the grip of

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International Finance, and, indeed, simply an instrument of it, is passive in the matter, which is not to say that all individuals in that Government are necessarily acquiescent. Once again it is the power of the machine, not the will of the man.

It would appear, therefore, that the Washington Conference had achieved definite results. It would seem to mark a victory for " normalcy," a staving off of a situation which might involve not merely political, but economic revolution, and, at the same time, progress on the part of Wall Street and Washington to the goal of Arbiter Mundi. And that would be so, had not the conclusions attained by it left unsolved, and even complicated, problems fatal both to the theory and to the policy, which problems it is our business to examine.

In order to grasp the reality of these problems, it is necessary to go back a little; to inspect afresh the pivot on which the whole situation turns. The Doctrine says: " If a man will not work, neither shall he eat "; and both High Finance and Extreme Labour chant Amen, each of them mentally reserving, for its own purposes, the right to define what is work.

But, enter a third party, Modern Applied Science and Technology, which says: " I will show you how to place the burden of Humanity on the backs of machines; to harness solar energy, through the medium of steam, oil, water-power, and even atomic energy, so that one man, working under conditions of great comfort and enthralling interest, shall produce enough for one thousand, of food, clothes, and housing."

Thus, between Modern Science and the Doctrine, is declared War to the death; for either Science will win, in which case an increasing majority of human beings will, in the nature of things, and not by any legalistic process, be released from the slavery of arbitrarily conditioned Employment (which is the stronghold of the Doctrine). Or Finance and Legalism will continue, as at present, to counter each advance of Science, so that labour-saving machinery will only enable man to do more " work," and sabotage and misdirection of effort will dispose of and waste the product, until such time as Science,

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misused and prostituted by Captains of Industry who know everything about their business except what it is for, will destroy civilisation.

Observe, then, that every industrialised Nation is faced with what it calls an " Unemployment " problem, and that organised Labour (oblivious to the glut of goods, and the organised attempts to restrict output on the part of the very people who called for more production three years ago) is calling for " Work or Maintenance." Just in that order.

(*To be continued.*)

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About Ghosts, etc.

By S. O.

Into the screeching chaos of our post-war materialism, which at least one may say has " materialised," Mr. Filson Young recently cast a frolicsome flare lighting the dim firmament of ghosts and the methods of those who seek them. But ghosts, whatever we may do, don't die; they are and have been always popular; it is we who are the haunters, and, as usual after war, they " boom " exceedingly. Perhaps they act to the stricken as a solace, and though those who hold court with the dead are constrained to do so through a mechanism of unspeakable vulgarity, such as music-hall songs, etc., etc., the number of the faithful grows, and he is an infidel, according to Sir A. Conan Doyle, who protests. It is a sign of the times. The dignitaries of the Established Church see ghosts with the best, and always the ghost-seer or seeker gets it back on the other fellow with the taunt, " You are a materialist."

The staid Victorian accepted this rebuff—it tickled his vanity—but to-day we are no longer Victorians: we are Victory-orians, and there are a terrible lot of dead young men, passed over in the process. To be styled a materialist no longer pleases. We say guardedly, " There may be something in it," and it is a safe retort. The individual who admits that he is a materialist is viewed askance. Women, in particular, who are very materialist in war, react spiritistically in peace. Deny ghosts to-day, and people stare. Tell them you have seen one, and popularity is yours. Expose a ghost, you are called, like the editor of *The Saturday Review*, " no gentleman."

Truly, we turn to ghosts lightly in these days, for they seem the only things left. Even wine, women, and song fail, when they cost too much. But ghosts are relatively cheap. A dark room, a gramophone, a musical-box, a medium, a trumpet, such are the

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accoutrements, and with this paraphernalia a "gent" or lady can chat with a dead one, hear him or her sing a comic song, and perhaps feel his touch, just like the lady who complained of Mr. Filson Young's tactility. All this is obtainable, in Paddington, Hampstead, or Mayfair, any afternoon. And there is this notable change in attitude, that whereas of old we quaked and shook in our shoes at the mention of spirits, to-day we welcome them; we serenade them, we would give our best girl to shake hands with the meanest ghost that ever flitted. Dispute them, and you can hop it. We are all psychic now—more or less—and so are the mathematicians, the philosophers and astronomers, and even the ecclesiasticals, and, of course, the newspapers. We have returned to the metaphysics of Faust.

Wireless telegraphy has, quite naturally, substantiated telepathy, which M. Flammarion (*The Mystery of Death*, Fisher Unwin, 10*s*.), for instance, now accepts as a scientific truth. Why not? The instincts of animals far exceed ours. A pigeon taken from the Strand to Moscow will fly straight back to London. An ant will find its way home any number of miles distant. As animals hypnotise other animals, so mortals can surely hypnotise. All this, yes. Love is a form of physical telepathy, and hate. Man has undoubtedly astonishing presentiments, uncanny forebodings, premonitions, insights, divinations; but these instincts or latent powers have no affinity with ghosts, who must be subjective phenomena, and therefore not visible, because not measurable, by us. Telepathy, second-sight, clairvoyance, these are no doubt human attributes, but ghosts are different physically and psychically.

The point about ghosts is that they represent the incorporeal soul, granted in the first place that there is a soul as distinct from *consciousness*, which is highly controversial. Yet suppose we admit the soul as a separate entity and we assume that at death this entity passes over as a live or transubstantiated essence, thereby constituting itself a ghost, what then? The next step is space, into which this entity wanders. At once we are arrested, for we are still three-dimension beings, and at space all our concepts and all our measurements fail. We are reduced to impotence. We have neither instruments nor concepts to

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cope with the unknown dimensions of the infinite, now, let us assume, the abode of man's incorporeal spirit. Once there the soul, now spirit, obviously acquires space dimensions. Timeless, roofless, bottomless, such, we say, is space. There may be ghosts by the myriads there; there may be music, speech, sense, love, comprehension, joy unfathomable, but how can we, with our limited three-dimension concepts, penetrate into confines that we cannot measure, see forms we cannot visualise; catch sounds we cannot hear; grasp what is still to us utterly because materially incomprehensible? The word "materially" is of importance here, all that we can measure, see, hear, or conceive being material, which spiritists admit. How, then, can a trumpet give us a fourth-dimension sense? Or a dark room give us fourth-dimension vision? Or any medium give us fourth-dimension understanding? We may say at once that our poor instruments of measurement are but three-dimensional toys; indeed we know this. We reckon by time, but astronomers tell us there is no such thing as past, present, and future. Time is merely our earthly measurement. Thus we talk of the sunrise, which is an absurdity; of life as a beginning, of death as an end; but in space all is one everlasting actuality, one imponderable, infinite, eternal dynamism so wonderful, so mysterious in its illimitude that we can but conjecture a design or a divinity.

Animals have no three-dimensional concepts, and so they have no consciousness. Thus pity, truth, piety, mercy, virtue, chastity, reverence, charity, remorse, ambition, conscience, —these are unknown faculties to them, and so to them the darkness is purely objective; indeed, the owl and the pussy-cat revel in the dark. We, who are three-dimensional, have consciousness. If at darkness we think subjectively, we cannot so see; we grope; before space we abdicate; in the presence of the universe we can but marvel. To imagine, then, that we can probe the mysteries of dimensions beyond our concepts by using our material instruments must be self-deception, it cannot be scientific, least of all can it be spiritual. For to know we must be able to take measurements, as we measure distances, *i.e.*, things that we can see. The subjective still eludes our vision, and unless ghosts are objective, or can at will take on objective forms,

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they must remain to us subjective phenomena, things, that is, that our limited vision cannot receive, for so limited are we that what we cannot see we cannot measure, any more than a dog can measure an acre of land. To hunt ghosts with three-dimension appliances is like setting a rabbit to study Euclid—the poor beast can't. To enable the rabbit to master *pons asinorum* it must first have consciousness; to enable us to see a ghost we must first acquire a new sense which must be capable of proof. Obviously an objective ghost is a contradiction in terms, an absurdity. If ghosts walk the earth, they do so in subjective dimensions which we cannot see, our eyes being objective. Shakespeare's ghosts were subjectively objective. Their illusion was three-dimensional. But a ghost which has to materialise through a professional medium can only partake of the good old objective form of our materialist or three-dimensional understanding, as ghosts are produced in theatres and, *pace* the enthusiasts, in séances. It is scientifically merely proof of our pitiful vanity that we expect souls to use our elementary instruments, and that way, surely, we shall hunt ghosts in vain. If we are to spot them, we shall have to obtain a fourth-dimension sense far transcending Einstein's mathematics. To talk with ghosts we shall have to acquire a sense as far above any now possessed by us as man's understanding is above an animal's, and it really seems rather derogatory to the dignity of spirits that we should assume for one moment that our material methods should be able to sense their ethereal forms or dimensions in conditions which pass our understanding. That is the scientific objection to ghost-hunting or speaking with the dead *via* trumpets. We may admire Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's enthusiasm, but his methods are not scientific, and until we can determine the exact differentiation between thought and illusion, between will and psychicness, between sanity and madness or genius, we are not in the least bit likely to see, hear, or effect contact with any apparitional being not measurable by our concepts and so subjective. For that must clearly be the first step—subjective sight.

One's natural sympathy for ghosts induces one to the hope that this power may eventually be acquired, but so far it certainly has not been, and in the research fear must sharply be isolated from all communication. A man

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who fears to sleep in a haunted house gives merely a proof of fear, nothing more. When we fear ghosts we are not psychic, we are non-scientific, we are essentially material, fear being the bed-rock of materialism. Our mundane conception of ghosts is obviously based on rudimentary fear of the unknown, thus of the dark. But spirits, an there be spirits, surely have escaped beyond our base conceptions of fear. They must in essence belong to the dynamism of their conditions, and as such they can hardly in their incorporeal state know fear. At least they must be Nelsons. Fear is a bodily conception derived from physical pain. It is the only consciousness known to animals, hence the fact that we no longer fear ghosts constitutes an advance and is to be welcomed. So far we are right. It would seem the A B C of spirit investigation. So long as we fear, we shall never see spirits, unless they are practical jokers. We can imagine them, of course. But that is the difficulty. It is not enough to say "I am psychic therefore etc." The subjective is not demonstrable because not measurable scientifically. To obtain access to the noumenal world we must at least have some knowledge of its definitions and of its axioms.

The lower the civilisation the greater the fear of ghosts, thus niggers are tremendous ghost-funks, and our assumption that they are robed in white or whitish ectoplasm is probably entirely due to the notion that they are only visible in the dark. All this is superstition, the relics of Paganism, also it is a confusion of thought to associate man's telepathic, second-sight, or animistic powers with after-death phenomena, as psychic people do. No doubt we shall greatly extend our three-dimensional powers of conception, but ghosts cannot be matter; and it is mere vanity to suppose that any constituent of a non-material world, capable, as we assume, of floating transparently in air, would condescend to use our very limited five senses, through the use of which only can we know them. Hysteria is a malady, not a faculty, and ladies who spend their afternoons listening in the dark at the end of a trumpet are but victims of their own hallucinations. The mystery of death is—life; its cause; its purpose; and it is because religion has concentrated on the hereafter and so little on the present that it has lost its moral authority.

We have yet to discover the reagent for the visibility

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of spirit, however strong the reaction, and it is here that our flutter anent ghosts may prove of evolutionary moment. It is as if the dead, the twelve million dead young men of the war, were troubling our consciences, provoking us to thought, spurring us to new conceptions—of life. While the public clamour for ghosts through trumpets, thinking man is stirring; and so we find most of the notable books now appearing of the mathematicians, the astronomers and philosophers returning to metaphysics. And what they are attacking is the materialistic conception of history, whether of life or religion or social economics. The philosophy of the objective has failed morally and politically, and the holocaust of Europe is the result. Its scientific reaction is the portent of the hour. If massacre is all that men can do, then they are failures. Out of materialism only fear, war, and greed appear, thus as we grow more scientific we are moving towards a scientific philosophy and organisation of mutual self-destruction. We can hardly deny that. What are we to do? It is before that question that ghosts indicate a correction.

Perhaps civilisation has reached a stage in its evolution when the objective or material philosophy of life preconditions destruction and the only escape is the subjective. Man has to fight or escape from his corporeal imprisonment, he has to discover his soul. In thought this is not new, on the contrary it is very old. As we look round on the world to-day as the result of war we can see nothing but a future of war—fear, vanity, greed, destruction, and only a new attitude, a higher understanding, can save us. What is that understanding to be? Can it come through organised religion, through politicians, through economics? Hardly. Shall we end by destroying civilisation in some final scientific dog-fight? Again, we say, hardly. There must be something better than fear and war and conditions of war, and already the thinkers tell us that there is. The way out is the fourth or new dimension sense; it is the study and knowledge of cause. In other words, man has to develop his soul, has to acquire and formulate the mathematics of that inner sense that is his, directing the molecular brain-power of his present-day consciousness. He has to go back to the school of causes, seeking the subliminal truth through the subjective, obtaining a foothold to the higher dimensions.

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This it is, frankly, that would appear noteworthy in the present popularity of ghosts. Not they, but we; our reaction lashed by the stigmata of war from the materialistic concepts of life, which started into being with the French Revolution, in which urge and subjective tendency ghosts may well be playing a conscious part. If there are souls, if, again, souls become spirits, then those twelve million splendid young men of Europe slain for materialistic conceptions may be assumed to have something to suggest, and auto-suggestion is a recognised power. Though we cannot see them, these spirits may act as stimuli; so much we can admit. That it is time they did so, few will deny. Indeed we may go so far as to say that if they don't or cannot so react, their powers of association with our three-dimensional faculties must be extraordinarily slight, and all idea of contact with them may be dismissed. For our will to see and hear is real enough. Unless spirits are impervious or impotent to react upon us, they must certainly sense the world's misery and heart-cries and seek our enlightenment. Otherwise our quest will surely be long and arduous. Yet some such stimulus is afoot, and the creed of materialism seems to be etiolating before the telescope of astronomy. Thus the philosophy of the last century is crumbling and we are returning to the study of the unmeasurable, to the determinism of the Indian philosophers of thousands of years ago. The East is flowing back philosophically and spiritually across the West, and we are its receivers. Not man but man's inner self is the motive, not what we see but what we do not see is the illumination. Once more revelation starts from the East. It may not give us a new optical sense, but the new vision that is springing from these promptings and demonstrations may yet endow us with a higher comprehension of causes and their phenomena and of human purpose, seeing that if we fail to attain to some nobler conception of humanity than that which inspired the war and dictated the continuation of war in peace, death would appear man's manifest and soulless destiny, and in that case the ghosts, who are but our spirits, are less and less likely to visit us or want to see us, or themselves to be visible, audible, or measurable through any lenses, trumpets, or media utilised by our poor objectivity.

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A True Currency*

By August Schvan

ABSOLUTE freedom of exchange requires a perfect means of exchange. The payments for products and services obtained anywhere must enable the seller to get his full equivalents everywhere and at any time. Otherwise a great deal of unemployment is bound to result all over the world. The present situation is a case in point. The entire population of many countries is actually unable to cover the direst wants for lack of a proper currency, while there is a glut of production in others that for this very reason cannot find buyers for their produce, and thus gradually are forced to shut many works, to restrict even the production of raw materials. The resulting unemployment necessitates in its turn the imposing of taxation which curtails the purchasing power of everybody in the land, and this reacts again on the countries suffering from bad currencies. Their products find fewer buyers, and their means of buying decrease correspondingly. Hence the fundamental importance of the currency problem. Before it is solved talk about the restoration of Europe is nothing but talk.

A return to the pre-war gold currency as a means of righting the exchanges is impossible. The United States of America are already in possession of the major part of the available gold. The rest must find its way thither in payment either of Europe's debts or of the raw materials that have to be got from the other side of the Atlantic. The United States are still too deeply imbued by the protectionist fallacy to accept payment in goods. Those who have no political axe to grind, and therefore dare to see things as they really are, would do well to recognise these simple facts as fundamental axioms.

On the other hand, the printing of unlimited quantities of paper money that fluctuates from day to day in value, and ultimately is bound to approach zero, can only bring about

* From Mr. Schvan's book, *Towards a New Social Order*, shortly to appear.

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the same results as in Russia, where Lenin and Trotzky, in pursuance of their criminal stupidity, deliberately debased the currency with the object of dispossessing all owners of property and of preventing the accumulation of fresh savings. Yet the Bolshevists have no truer allies than those Governments whose finances have their mainstay in the printing of banknotes, not to mention those whose policy consists in forcing their neighbours to resort to this easy way of making "money."

Now the experiences of the last decade have abundantly proved the sacrosanct theory of the gold covering to be a fallacy. In most countries paper money has been accepted and used as a medium of exchange without losing its supposed value, notwithstanding the absence of adequate gold reserves, or the fact that these reserves have been put out of function by laws or decrees, prohibiting the exchange of gold for banknotes. Nowhere does the strength of the existing gold reserves buried in the vaults of the issuing banks seem to influence the face value of the paper money. The most instructive illustration is furnished by the relative position of the Swedish and the Danish crowns, which before the war stood at par. The latter have a gold covering of 54 per cent., the former only of 45 per cent., and yet the Swedish crown stands about 25 per cent. higher than the Danish! The reason is not far to seek. In Sweden the circulation of banknotes amounts to some 100 crowns per head of the population, whereas in Denmark it reaches 130 crowns, a figure necessitated through the ruinous policy of the Socialistic Government, which in every way encouraged the process of inflation.

Events have also put the old shibboleth of the balance of trade out of court. All countries that enjoy a high rate of exchange—which appears to be almost as questionable an advantage as a low rate—with the exception of the United States, have what economists are pleased to style an "unfavourable" balance. Great Britain, Sweden, Holland, and Switzerland furnish the most striking examples. Their imports are far greater than their exports without being covered by what are termed invisible exports. Other countries, for instance France, have an excess of exports over imports, yet their rate of exchange is very

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unfavourable, contrary to the " law " ot the supposed " favourable " balance of trade.

Coinage has equally demonstrated the error of the metallist school. Tokens of paper, or of almost valueless substitutes for silver and copper, are readily used by the public. The nominalists have undoubtedly gained the day. It is now beyond dispute that the value of any currency depends entirely upon its purchasing power in the country of issue, and that the smaller or greater probability of the constancy of this power has a controlling influence on the rate of exchange. The easiest way to maintain the constancy of the purchasing power of any currency is to ensure that the fiduciary circulation always bears a fixed relation to the productive power of the people, which constitutes the foundation of their purchasing power.

The most perfect measure for this productive power is the total amount of the *economic rent*, this being the sum total of the prices that the inhabitants are willing to pay for the best use of the natural resources of their country. The more produce they extract from these the more they can buy from other countries. Thus the total economic rent gives, indeed, a true index of their purchasing power on the world market. At the same time, a rise in the total amount of the economic rent indicates the desirability of an increase in the fiduciary circulation. It is a sign that new enterprises can be started with great advantage as a rise of the economic rent indicates a rise in prices. The ensuing increase of production will then again tend to lower prices, attract buyers, and increase production. Should, on the contrary, the economic rent decrease, this would denote that production has overstepped consumption, and that a slowing down of the rate with which new enterprises are started has become desirable. Then the fiduciary circulation should be restricted if the currency unit is to maintain its purchasing power.

Taking pre-war conditions as the safest basis, the proper permanent relation between the economic rent and the circulating amount of currency ought to be as 2 : 3, and there is every reason why a fixed quantity of gold should be employed for measuring this relation. If the identical quantity be used in all countries a true world currency would thus virtually be created, and this could be done

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without being open to any of the objections which are valid as long as each country has to maintain large amounts of gold within its borders. The fixed relation between the economic rent annually flowing into the Treasury and the circulating currency would in fact provide a far greater security behind the notes and the tokens than any amount of gold, the value of which is bound to fluctuate with the increase of gold production, be it that this is brought about through the discovery of new gold fields, or through the invention of a process of synthetic manufacturing.

The universal acceptance of the same quantity of gold as a standard of currency would enormously facilitate and cheapen all commercial and banking operations. The arbitration houses, the often fanciful transactions of which constitute a serious burden on production and trade, would then have to shut their counters. A great number of irksome exchange institutions that fleece the ignorant traveller would disappear.

The most convenient standard for such a world currency is certainly the franc, the smallest of the great coins of the world. It contains 0.2903 gramme of gold, and is already in use in many countries, though under different names, as the lira, the peseta, etc. Its adoption by the remainder might tend to ease the wounded vanity of the French people, who with dismay contemplate the unavoidable ousting of their own tongue by the English language as a means of international understanding.

Yet there is no reason for abandoning the familiar names of the shilling, the mark, the crown, the florin, the dollar, the gulden, the rouble, etc. On the contrary, it is advisable to maintain them and restrict the use both of the banknotes and the tokens of nickel or of alloys of aluminium and copper to the countries of issue for the purpose of more easily detecting eventual forgeries. These monetary units should simply be reduced to the same amount of gold as the franc. They could then be exchanged at the frontiers at their parity value.

The British peoples would gain great advantages through such a procedure. Accounts and salaries would be made in shillings instead of in pounds, not to speak of the still more expensive guineas. Much waste and overpayment would disappear. The suggestive effect of a

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small monetary unit is tremendous. Look at the different impression produced by stating a salary to be 15,000 shillings instead of 600 pounds!

With a normal economic rent of £200,000,000 the circulating currency of the United Kingdom would be £300,000,000 or 7,500,000,000 new shillings/francs. France would presumably have 6,300,000,000 francs in circulation, Germany 9,000,000,000 new marks/francs, equal to 7,200,000,000 old gold marks.

The income derived from the issuing of banknotes and the minting of tokens/coins belongs clearly, like the economic rent, in equal parts to all citizens. These operations should therefore be undertaken by a State bank, of which the mint would constitute a mere annexe. It can be done without the slightest danger of political interference as soon as it is stipulated that the fixed ratio between the currency and the total amount of the economic rent has always to be maintained.

The elimination of all personal considerations in the fixing of the rate of discount can be secured in the same automatic manner by the adoption of a stipulation that a fixed proportion of the issued currency, say two-thirds, shall always be employed for discounting bills of exchange on delivered goods. The rate of discount would thus always be determined by the law of supply and demand without any possibility for the management of the State bank to favour one kind of business or the other. A rising rate would discourage all buyers and tend to secure a proper balance of trade between imports and exports. The ups and downs which cause so much speculation and misery would then entirely disappear, whereas a not unimportant percentage would be added to the common income from the economic rent. An average rate of discount of 4 per cent. would increase its gross amount by 6 per cent. when the total currency circulation is always kept at 150 per cent. of the total economic rent.

The remaining third of the currency might serve as building loans for the establishment of colonies of small holders or other wealth-producing purposes that are particularly apt to facilitate the intense utilisation of the natural resources so long withheld from the community at large. In future this third of the currency will also be

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available to meet contingencies arising out of the sudden appearance of inventions that cause a rapid and unexpected change in the methods of production and thus throw a large number of people out of work, or for alleviating unavoidable sufferings following upon floods and other catastrophes.

The transition to the new currency system is perfectly simple. Among the public debts to be redeemed through the proposed levy on wealth figures the amount with which the circulating currency—minus the value of existing gold covering—exceeds the future amount as fixed by the total economic rent. Once this excess has been removed through the exchange of industrial securities against superfluous banknotes, the remaining old currency in such notes and coins is easily withdrawn from circulation in exchange for the new notes and tokens. But simultaneously all private debts ought, of course, to be restated in terms that correspond to the proportional value of the new currency compared with the old. Otherwise the creditors would be favoured at the expense of the debtors.

In countries of which Germany may be cited as an example the way to proceed would be as follows: The value of the unimproved land and the natural resources which it contains is at first estimated in new gold marks (francs). Then the owners are made to take up mortgages on 7½ per cent. of the land values, constituting a first and prior lien on them and carrying an annual interest of 4 per cent. These mortgages on values, which, taken in their totality, are absolutely indestructible, and therefore not only as good as gold, but better, the value of the latter being threatened by increased production of the metal, are deposited with a new State bank, the only business of which would be to issue banknotes and tokens equivalent to the total amount of the mortgages received. In order, however, to enable the monetary circulation always to be adequate to the requirements of production, the land values should be subjected to an annual revision.

The actual burden on the owners of the land would be very slight, and in any case more than compensated through the increase in value which the introduction of a stable currency would cause. Take, for instance, an agri-

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cultural estate, the selling price of which is 100,000 new marks/gold francs. The land value would probably be about half that sum, the mortgage to be handed over to the new State bank consequently 3,750 new marks, on which the annual interest to be paid to the bank would amount to 150 new marks!

As the entire land values of Germany will be worth some 120,000 millions of new marks, the total amount of both the mortgages and the new currency would be about 9,000 millions of new marks. This is approximately equivalent to the whole monetary circulation before the war, which perfectly covered the needs of the prosperous country. The new notes and tokens should at once be employed to withdraw the present marks from circulation. They amount to some 125,000 millions. The rate of exchange would therefore work out as one new mark against fourteen of the present.

Due care being taken that all debts are restated at the same rate, Germany would then be in possession of a perfect currency, which would enable the German people again to appear on the world market as purchasers of the goods of the other nations, while simultaneously preventing any underselling on their part. The 360 millions of new marks that would annually be paid to the State bank as interest on the mortgages would be available as reparation payments, without causing the least disturbance to industry or commerce. These millions could with advantage be employed by the German Government as purchasing money for the reparations in kind that it has already undertaken, and would thus in no way influence the allied nations' ability to receive the payment of any reasonable indemnity in commodities.

The obvious drawback to this proposal is the objection that it would put the finances of Germany in a better position than those of the victorious peoples are likely to be for many years to come. But it is an objection that has no reality behind it. Thanks to the enormous inflation which has taken place in Germany, her debts already amount to a smaller proportion of the total real wealth of the country than the debts of either Great Britain, France, or Italy. The proposed currency reform would in no way alter this proportion. The conversion of the public

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debts from, say, 420,000 millions of old marks to 30,000 millions of new marks would, in fact, be simultaneous with the conversion of all other values according to the same ratio. If the land values, for instance, can be estimated at 120,000 millions in the new gold marks, they are certainly at present 14 times as big, or thereabouts, in the present paper marks.

Nations who have not followed the German policy of inflation have but one sure method of putting their finances in order, and that is to accept in their entirety the proposals outlined in these pages. Otherwise they will sooner or later succumb under the heavy burden of their public debts, or be forced to repudiate them, wholly or partly. This would be extremely dishonest toward those citizens who during the war were induced to come to the rescue of the community with their capital, whereas the paying off of the whole of the public debts in any one country would finally reduce the ill-gotten gains of the German war profiteer and those former enemies who, thanks to the economic insanity of the Peace treaties, have been able to accumulate vast fortunes. Coupled with the simultaneous abolition of all taxation and the granting of free access to all natural resources, it would have extremely far-reaching effects upon the world at large. Its financial, economic, social, and moral consequences would cause such a clamour for immediate imitation everywhere, that the German people, like all other nations, before long would have to follow suit.

These proposals constitute the one and only salvaging of civilisation that is attainable without all the horrors of a bloody revolution, and free from the long and agonising travail that inevitably follows in its trail. Whether one's starting-point be the desire for international or social peace, the settlement of the question of reparations, the revival of trade, the doing away with unemployment, the solution of the housing problem, the stabilisation of the exchanges, or the restoration of public and private honesty, the conclusion is identical. All roads lead to it.

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Russia and Europe

By Austin Harrison

"PEACELESS" Europe, to quote Nitti's scathing indictment or exposure of the men who made the Treaty, continues to drift deeper into anarchy, and anyone but the recipient of the £10 smile offering must fain ask himself how this mad business is to end. Genoa is "postponed," sabotaged by France, who refuses to discuss the inviolability of the Treaty which is the cause of all our miseries, and Italian Governments come and go in automatic procession. And now the Coalition is crumbling. It no longer pleases the Tories or militarists who see in India, Egypt, Ireland, and elsewhere only policeman's cases according to their class vision, but in reality fear is their guiding instinct, fear of the dispossessive tendencies of the age. To them Russia is the nightmare, in particular an evolutionary Russia emerging step by step through Bolshevism to ordered constitutional Republicanism, and so the man who was their foundling, the man "who won the war," is to-day stigmatised as the traitor who would sup with Lenin, and the dagger that is to finish him is being sharpened on every West End club doorstep. Mr. Lloyd George is up against his own handiwork at last, his own Nemesis. We reap what we sow. Lincoln's dictum re-echoes: "You cannot fool all the people all of the time."

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There are curious wind pockets to add to the confusion. Lord Grey has returned to public life with a somersault attack on the Premier under the panacea of secret diplomacy. Even the "Die-hards" are staggered. Lord Grey made all the Secret Treaties which turned Versailles into the instrument of revenge captained by M. Clemenceau, whom Nitti calls the "tremendous destroyer," whose one aim was to "disembowel" Germany. His advocacy of more secret diplomacy isolates him as a new world force,

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and unless he was merely getting his own back on a whilom colleague it is difficult to understand either his mentality or motive. Again, the new Centre Party is not materialising because in substance such a Party implies another Coalition, which is the one thing men are tired of. Ireland remains Ireland, the seat of secular poisons, now split into two rival Catholic camps, the De Valerians hugging the curse of St. Patrick, while Ulster still hopes to restore her Tory English ascendancy. Two million unemployed live on doles, *per contra* all the banks feverishly spend their absurd profits in extending premises. Europe sinks financially and economically. In Russia 20,000,000 men, women, and children are faced with starvation, of whom Dr. Nansen assures an apathetic world that 10,000,000 must die, and Governments *fear* to give the £5,000,000 necessary to save the other ten millions. Such is " peaceless " Europe as the result of our shameful collusion with the French conception of revenge. And such is the Premier's difficulty to-day. The evil that men do lives after them. The Europe of Versailles is a Europe of death, war, despair. We are paying the price. We are eating our own swords.

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None the less the Premier holds the balance, and if he fails, fails to stand four-square to fortune and fight for the honour and sanity of England, this year may well prove cataclysmic to Western civilisation. For the truth is, he has gone round the circle. In Signor Nitti's book we hear for the first time of the Memorandum addressed by Mr. Lloyd George to the " big four " at Paris in March, 1919, wherein he pleaded for civilised statesmanship, there and then branding the contemplated Treaty as an immoral and stupid work. It was in vain, and the Premier, unlike the old Protestant martyrs, preferred the gold pen. Now it is his boomerang. France holds the dice. She sits, like Shylock, demanding her pound of flesh, and there is no Portia. But the Premier knows now the evil that was done. He realises that it cannot function. He sees that the Treaty must be revised lock, stock, and barrel, but he himself was a signatory, the only surviving signatory, and the French do not understand an international bond that

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can be treated like a "scrap of paper." There is an inscrutable justice in life, that is the position we are to-day approaching. Mr. Lloyd George is now in much the same situation as was President Wilson, whom he played false to. He thinks now as President Wilson thought then. Alas! too late. The forces that betrayed and crushed the President are ready to betray and crush Mr. Lloyd George. Will he win out? It is the world's question. Will our Premier stand, like Luther, to his points? Or will he hesitate? Undoubtedly the history of the next ten years will depend upon the will and character of this one man.

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The immediate issue is Russia, over whose corpse Europe is wrangling precisely as she wrangled at Versailles over Germany, who to-day is politically out of the picture. Here the enemy—I use the word humanly in its relationship to civilisation—is France, and unless Mr. Lloyd George faces the point his hour will inevitably have struck. At Genoa it was agreed to call in Russia, a perfectly right decision. But the French mean to prevent Russia's appearance there, and in collusion important forces in this country are mobilising. What is the reason? The reason is the terrible famine which will, unless aid is forthcoming on a vast scale, depopulate and turn into an arid desert the rich Volga basin. The French reason in this wise: Let those ten or twenty million moujiks die of starvation and Bolshevism will be cast out, no Government being able to survive a holocaust of 10 to 20 per cent. of its people. Then, they argue, " we " can go in; restore the " White " *régime*, perhaps a Tsar, at least force Russia to acknowledge her debts, and, with the help of the returned *emigrés*, France and Russia can once more be militarily united, this time to subjugate and control Europe. Such is the line of action openly professed and at this moment spread as propaganda by numbers of agents sent *ad hoc* to this country. Their fear is Mr. Lloyd George. Will he get back? They reckon that he won't. They hope to see a Tory Government installed here, which will make a definite military treaty with France to uphold the map of Versailles; then they hope to make a similar treaty with Russia. The price is the slow death of ten

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million Russian peasants. That is the explanation of the Press campaign here against Dr. Nansen, that is the reason of the Tory revolt. If Mr. Lloyd George takes tea with Dr. Lenin, their policy may not mature. If Nansen can raise the money to save those unhappy peasants, Bolshevism may survive. The policy, therefore, is death. "Let them all die," is the cry, and at this juncture Lord Grey spanks into the arena with an appeal for "poor" France!

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To say that Christianity is on trial is to talk a dead tongue; civilisation is in the melting-pot, and if, in the interests of international Jewish finance and French militarism, England refuses succour, turns a blind eye to the hideous tragedy of the Volga, funks—that is the awful truth—funks to champion this cause of sheer humanity, then in truth we shall have lost our proud name in the world before God and man. It is not as if this famine was the direct result of Bolshevism. Its causes are many. As Nansen has pointed out, the drought of unprecedented duration is the prime cause, our long blockade of Russia is another. Russia, without outside help, cannot provide agricultural instruments; cannot repair locomotives, cannot improve her transport—she has been blockaded ever since 1914. During the counter-revolutionary wars of Petlura, Koltchak, Kornilov, etc., the soil has been ravaged, the peasants decimated, crops, seed, implements destroyed, the land poisoned. The contributory causes are obvious to any man who pauses to think. They are the accompaniments of war, revolution, counter-revolution, blockade, plus the native ignorance and inefficiency of the Russians, also without a doubt gravely aggravated by the Bolshevist system of requisitions and monetary destruction. But Russia's holocaust is Europe's responsibility. It is a condition of war, and to-day we stand in so-called peace. If civilisation is to look on indifferent to the terrible famine now certain to destroy more lives than were lost by fighting in four years of organised massacre in the name of "liberty," then we had better coin a new word for our professions, for in truth savagery is the only fit description. We may sympathise with the sufferings of Russian *emigrés*. We may

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make just conditions in return for relief, but we cannot call ourselves Christians and refuse; we dare not decline this call of chivalry, of great adventure, of glorious tradition, and talk of humanity. We stand before a gateway in our history. If England is to survive as the mother and arbiter of Western civilisation, we must choose now; either to go to the aid of Russia in her extremity or to abandon our noble tradition and admit, what we never yet have admitted, defeat. Moral defeat. Inability to rise to the greatness of our opportunities. Acquiescence in gross cynical materialism.

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The sum of £5,000,000 is paltry enough compared with the waste following the Armistice, since which day we have expended, or thrown away, nearly £5,000,000,000. On what? Even to-day at the idea of economy the State Departments are in revolt. The Geddes "axe" is a political joke. Yet £5,000,000 spent on food can save 10,000,000 Russian peasants. The French say, No, let them die, for then Dr. Lenin will have his throat cut, and they talk very much as we talked of Danton and Robespierre in the days of Pitt. Well, what then? Suppose, out of fear of the French, out of fear of our own militarists, themselves the unwitting tools of finance, Jewish, Jesuit, and Christian, we let them die, and the sequel is the rout of Lenin-Trotzky, what then? The French say, "Then we go in. The next stage is an Allied occupation of Russia, police control, say 300,000 troops." And then? Can we afford to send 100,000 troops to police Russia? If so, what price Sir Geddes? What price our Anti-waste Party? True, the French with an army of 800,000 men might easily find something for some of them to do—in Russia. But can we look on and see black conscripts strangling Bolshevists in the name of democracy? Can we really assist at the farce of a Tsarist restoration? Can we really so prostitute the cause for which men by the ten thousand gloriously died in war for a Bolshevist St. Bartholomew massacre? I doubt it. I do not think we dare, even in the interests of finance. Yet this is the plot, and it aims at Anglo-Russian-Turkish domination of Europe at the expense of ten to twenty million Russian

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peasants' lives, put forward in cold blood as the *haute politique* of M. Poincaré, called in France *la guerre*. One of these emissaries from Paris said to me last week: "Every sovereign given to Nansen retards Lenin's overthrow. Now is the time, and when that monster falls we can let in our counter-revolutionary armies who will clear up the mess. Afterwards order, Allied police, a militarist Government under, say, a Grand Duke, Cossack methods, a re-beginning" The speaker was a Russian. "You do not consider your dying peasantry," I rejoined. He shrugged his shoulders. "Russia always suffers," was the characteristic reply, and its fatalism is the cause of Russia's disaster. What is to be our answer? That is Mr. Lloyd George's predicament. Yet why are these millions to be left to die? Because Lenin's system is dangerous to our financial system. Because capital is man's god to-day. Because commercialism has so degraded Western civilisation that there is no religion or moral sense left. Because the French mean, if they can, to get back the millions lent to Tsarist Russia which enabled her to throttle and beat down the threatening revolution.

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Had any man in England before the war suggested in the face of such an appalling tragedy on paper or on a public platform that we should refuse relief to twenty million peasants doomed to a terrible death on political grounds, such an individual would have been execrated as an unfeeling brute. Yet that is the exact position now confronting us. The difficulty is not the money. It is not economy, there is no such thing yet in this country. It is not that we have become entirely callous, as witness the splendid contributions already made. The sole difficulty is politics. It is that a few politicians in Paris, a few here, and a few wealthy men hope to smash Lenin by refusing succour to his dying peasantry, and against this caucus of financial priesthood there stands towering above their morbid fears and vanities the manhood of the explorer, Nansen. He is not concerned to-day with Polar expeditions. He has stepped forth from his Scandinavian home like a Crusader to fight for humanity, regardless of politicians and their machinations, and his appeal, his char-

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acter, his impersonality shine out with the flame of a Messiah. Are we to listen? Is he to go back with the confession that England, out of fear, feared to help? Is he to say Mr. Lloyd George dared not grant the necessary sum? It would seem unthinkable. Rather should we ask, Who dares to prevent him? Nay, it is our duty to force all those who oppose this gift of charity out into the open. In front of Nansen not a man of them ventures to appear. Not one has the temerity to appear on the platform and say "Let them die." And the public, doped and dazed with propaganda, knows not what to think. The sordid attempt to stampede the women of this country into panic will surely fail. One would like to see the woman who would publicly plead for the death of ten million peasants. One would like to look into the eyes of such a woman. One would like to see that man who face to face with Nansen will call him a liar.

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The jibe of the hour is the taunt, "shaking hands with murderers." It is a rank witticism after a war in which 12,000,000 young men were killed, but are not the men who would let 10,000,000 women and children die in the cold of hunger murderers of the most deliberate kind? Is it because the Russians slain in the revolution were gentlefolk, whereas the dying peasants are commoners, that the epithet does not apply? Is this the new philosophy of state? A few years ago organised slaughter was the height of patriotism. Is organised callousness to another people's holocaust to be the height of political wisdom? If so, better we had lost the war and at least gone down with honour. That, at least, never dies. It is our heritage, our sincerest tradition. At whose orders are we to sully England's honour? For what end? It will not benefit trade when the Volga is a desert, for then we must continue to buy our bread from America and pay more for it. We shall sell less too. We shall still further weaken Europe's purchasing-power, and we shall have more unemployed. Shaking hands with murderers is one of those war propagandist cries as false and loathsome as the famous lie about the German *Kadaver-Anstalt*, which assuredly will pass, greatly to our discredit, into history. But we can

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ring down the curtain on war in which what is or is not justifiable is incapable of valuation. To-day we are in peace, seeking to reacquire the lost habits of peace, above all to work back to confidence. The need is of reason. Nor can Europe be reconstructed on a blood-bath of political savagery. The French idea of occupying Russia for the purpose of reorganising her into a fighting military machine is doomed to failure whether Lenin falls or not, for the peasantry will not return to feudal bondage and the land will remain the structure of all sound reconstitution. It is on that question that the Premier will stand or fall. Those who are working for his fall work for militarist France against peace, prosperity, and progress, for European bankruptcy and decay.

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The bitter truth is that at Versailles the victors threw away the fruits of victory for a cockpit of conquests which satisfied none and alienated all, and in the consequent dilemma Russia appears before France as once more the potential deliverer. That is the explanation of the French secret Treaty with Turkey, which virtually assures to France the control of the Dardanelles. By this move France has acquired a valuable bargaining instrument to be dangled before the emigrant Russians as the price of their return. In other words, Constantinople is the strategic issue; we return to the diplomacy of pre-Crimean war days. It is our fault, in particular the Premier's, who, hypnotised by Mr. Venizelos, encouraged Greece to embark on an annexationist policy in Asia Minor. That is why Egypt to-day is of prime strategic importance. If France can sidestep into Russia over the corpses of ten million peasants, her offer to Russia can be Constantinople, for of course the casual and silly excisions cut out of Russia under the names of Lithuania, Esthonia, Bessarabia, etc., can only be transitory landslides which, the moment Russia returns to the national sense, will be in yearly jeopardy and will inevitably be won back by the avenging sword, which is the reason why Poland secretly favours the Bolshevists, because she knows that Russia *redivivus* will never sanction the " disgrace " of the Treaty of Versailles. But the Russian *emigrés* take a long view,

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and their first step is to get back. Then, of course, they reason: *nous verrons*, and of course we shall. They reckon that the hour of deliverance has struck unless the sentimental British save the Russian peasants or the Conservative elements in Britain fail to knock out the enemy of French militarism, who in their eyes is Mr. Lloyd George. That, too, is the reason for the strange and sudden fondness of M. Poincaré for the League of Nations, which body he, probably rightly, thinks can be controlled by France, seeing that its representatives are Governmental nominees so well trained that, as we know, six months ago they flatly refused Nansen's request for aid for Russia. Truly a peculiar epigon of President Wilson's mighty areopagus of justice which was to be! Russia is thus to-day the European political cockshy, and the French, who are desperate and quite ruthless, mean to employ every device known to diplomacy to force our hands; either to enter into a fighting alliance with them to maintain the new Napoleonic map or to force back Russia into their pre-war military coils, which, as Nitti frankly says, was one of the main causes of the Great War. With Russia back under French military control, with Greater Poland and the " Little Entente " adequately armed and primed, France reckons that she can master Europe, or at least cause Germany's break-up, which began as a deliberate policy with the insistence of gold-mark payments, thus ensuring paper or German financial ruin. Mr. Lloyd George did not understand the significance of gold-mark payments at the time, but he does now with 2,000,000 unemployed living on doles and trade gone to slump. But the French knew well, and their calculation is that, sooner than share in the inevitable financial crash, Bavaria and the Rhine Provinces, especially as they are Catholic, may prefer dissociation from the united Germany of Bismarck as she drifts into paper insolvency.

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We have at last granted Austria financial relief, at a price which is in effect the subordination of that dismembered country to British financial control under a bank credit issue directed by us, *i.e.*, we return to our Continental policy which terminated with " Bloody " Mary's loss of

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Calais. The Africanisation of Europe has begun. The countries sell out, mortgage themselves to other countries who in rotation mortgage themselves through us to America; and such was the Stinnes policy towards Russia. What we can do for policy, we can surely do for life, and we cannot afford not to do it. That really is the impulse. No man who saw the hideous photographs of the famine area would object to the allocation of the salving sum, and if our ex-soldiers only knew of the torments they assuredly would be the first to give their bit. An international salvage fund should be started, Governmentally supported, and immediately voluntary transport services should be called for. The appeal would be met tenfold. Let us not deceive ourselves. A ghastly famine rages also in China. *Food* is the world's problem, or rather the monopolist "hold up" of food in the interests of finance. There is food in abundance to save the Russian peasantry. The question of credit is nugatory with all Europe bankrupt. What blocks the way is diplomacy, secret financial diplomacy.

Lord Grey thus need not fear any lack of secret diplomacy, for little else is afoot or intended, and even the glacial figure of Nansen is spattered with its mud. America, perhaps wisely, holds aloof. Unless she is prepared to dictate, what can she do with Governments who live on "paper," who refuse to balance Budgets, who fear to tax their peoples, whose avowed policy is the military map? England's question is Russia. Are we to go in with France to restore Imperial Russia, or are we to help revolutionary Russia to emerge into constitutional health? The price of the French policy is disgrace—there is no other word—for that we shall escape retribution if we allow 20,000,000 peasants to die is not to be expected. The only right attitude is Nansen's. It is humanity. It is the saving of human life. It is to feed as many of these poor peasants as we can, regardless of policy or any consideration, and to say so openly to France. Little can happen now at Genoa if and when it meets, for until we have settled upon our policy with France, which really means our policy towards Europe, and considered the price, we are beating the air of intrigue and delusion, and trade recovery here is impossible. It is this uncertainty that is capsizing the Coalition. It is this hopeless unreality that

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will upset the Premier, now faced with the full effects of the Versailles Treaty. They say that he may retire, yet he can scarcely do so with honour, for his is the responsibility of the Peace, and to run away now from the sinking ship would not be creditable. If ever a man had need of resolution it is the Premier to-day. The country would certainly back him if he is ready to brave the winds of fortune and stand for the right after all merely as hundreds of thousands of his countrymen did in battle in obedience to his own patriotism. He has the example of Nansen before him. Let him stand shoulder to shoulder with the Polar explorer and with him set out on the quest of humanity, and he will not fail. Otherwise his lucky star will set. The faith and truth of the country are as sound as ever. True, the public voice is not articulate, but this is the fault of the Press, which, inebriated with the power of the machine vested in it in war, still preserves its disciplinary control over attitude, which in war superseded opinion. It is an unhealthy condition. But the control of newspapers is opinion, which is the deciding counter-check, and already opinion has begun to chafe under its long and enforced tutelage. England is looking for a man. We shall not follow the decree of death. Thus the Premier stands before a fateful decision, and Europe hangs on the result. He has the grand, it may be his final, choice. The issue is European peace, progress, and recovery. The alternative is death, chaos. The only English way is the road of service, of honour, towards the light, and Nelson's spyglass riveted on all would-be destroyers.

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The Asylum as It Should Be

By Paul Elgood

I CLAIM to know something of the inside doings of an asylum, having been for two years an attendant on the insane. During that period I did duty in all the wards, sometimes as charge attendant, and possessed in the end a pretty intimate knowledge of the various peculiarities of its something like eight hundred inmates. The institution was a county one for pauper patients, and so far as food and general treatment went, there was nothing deserving of serious complaint. It was, however, so to speak, run by the ratepayers, and, as generally happens in all such cases, efficiency had to play second fiddle to economy. Attendants were chosen haphazard. A man who was a musician was invariably accepted before another whose equable temperament and natural tact might have proved a blessing and help to the sufferers. Here is where most of the cruelty comes into asylum life. No experience is necessary. Men come and go—I will venture to say—at the rate of one a week, and inflict much torturing irritation on the patients by their tactless handling. Moreover, these institutions are understaffed. I once knew an attendant to have been almost murdered by an irate patient. He was at the time in a dormitory of fifty patients single-handed, with no possibility of calling for help. This same economy at any price governs the number of doctors employed. Here let me state that if I had anyone belonging to me in an asylum, I would rather consult an intelligent attendant on his or her condition than the medical officers. They make the rounds of the wards once a day, and glance perfunctorily at the inmates who force themselves under their notice. Others of an unobtrusive, sulky disposition they never look at from one year's end to another, except in a case of illness. The medical officer always seemed to me to regard his patients as under restraint instead of under treatment.

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If they got better, well and good; if they didn't, there they had to remain.

I am giving my experience, and it is now many years ago. Modern methods may show improvements, but the daily papers have daily advertisements for male and female attendants, with the old tag added, "No experience necessary," and so the one great improvement is lacking. These institutions are still virtually prisons for the insane, whereas they ought to be hospitals for enfeebled will power. For all definitions of science in classifying insanity, except in congenital idiocy, resolve themselves into that. The trained attendant might do great things in an asylum; the doctors, except so far as healing bodily infirmities, can do nothing. They have neither the time nor, I fear, the inclination to tackle the greater job. They are sort of fatalists, paralysed into inaction by conventions based on antecedents. Madness is incurable—generally; medical skill is of little avail. Consequently the unfortunate sufferers are given over entirely to the attendants to be kept under lock and key, and marched here and there to a set time-table in regular prison style. If one turns refractory, he is punished by the attendants surreptitiously, and often maltreated so badly as to cause death. Fighting with another patient is the report, or else accidentally injured while being restrained, and one more thus drops off the ratepayers' burden.

This would be obviated if these institutions were regarded as hospitals for enfeebled will power. As things now stand, a patient may brutally assault an attendant, may even murder him, for he knows himself outside the law. The really irresponsible lunatic is generally harmless and inoffensive. The most trying one is the natural blackguard, who is so far recovered as to be able to discriminate between the right and wrong of his conduct. Some lesson of self-restraint would be good for the man. Corporal punishment I do not hold with, especially the shower-bath —I do not know if it is still continued, but it is inefficacious and tyrannical. What is needed is some humane method of suppressing unruly inclinations, to make the patient feel that he is an invalided citizen whose recovery is the sole object aimed at. As it is now, he may prove himself a wild animal, destroy property, maim and wound those

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around him without being called to account for his actions, or suffer any greater consequences than perhaps a month's delay in his discharge. Physical restraint is altogether relied on; reasoning is never tried, hence the asylum becomes to these men a privileged prison instead of a hospital where experienced nurses in mental ailments are engaged in restoring the mind's balance. This would, of course, necessitate smaller groupings of patients and further expenses on the ratepayers. But after all it might be cheaper for them than the present system, which permits the semi-cured to go home to beget other unfortunates who must ultimately drift under the care of parochial authorities. We have only to look around us to-day to realise what a troubled sea of humanity our neglect and indifference has brought about—the woman sucking all day long at the teapot, the bibbler nervously fingering his glass charged with poisonous decoctions under the name of stimulants, the habitual drunkard sodden in mind and body, the smoker never satisfied, the queues at the chemists' shops vainly endeavouring to find surcease from distraught nerves, all a mad humanity in the making, threatening industry with unbearable burdens.

What I set out to speak of, however, was the treatment of asylum inmates. The evidence of the inmates themselves should be received with caution. There is no lack of food. Some patients have inordinate appetites. Gluttony inside or outside an asylum needs checking for health's sake. I never saw any lack of food in the patients' dining halls, and, should necessity force one of them to be confined to the single room, he had his due allowance of food at the proper hour. It is in the groupings of patients the real bad treatment exists. A patient in senile decay or an idiot may be mingled with the able-bodied. Their habits are too often repulsive, which brings chastisement on them from their companions.

At the asylum I am writing about only one attendant was set apart for night duty. He had to visit the eight hundred inmates at regular hours. Many of these had by necessity to be confined in single rooms; some for instance never left off talking, even in their sleep. These single rooms had an outer and an inner door. The outer door had to be locked behind him on entering by the attendant

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to prevent the inmate rushing into the corridor. He was thus locked in with perhaps a homicidal patient. The danger the man stood in is apparent. Consequently the practice here, with the full knowledge of the head attendant, if not with that of the medical superintendent, was to let a stalwart patient who was convalescent—one of the ins and outs of asylum life, who would be a capital citizen if he could be saved from the whiskey bottle—accompany the night attendant on his rounds, and it was heaven help the one that turned refractory on their hands. There were certain tricks practised in handling the inmates which inflicted much pain, leading often to fatal results. These were easily explained away by the two words, " Necessary restraint."

In regard to patients being deprived of their liberty without reasonable cause, I doubt if ever such a thing occurs in public asylums. Plenty are there who can tell such a plausible tale of wrong detention through the cupidity of friends, rivalry in love or business, as to win credulity from the inexperienced. I confess I used to be taken in myself at first by these stories, almost to the point of being tempted to unlock the door for the man, till some accidental word brought the patient to his pet delusion. The question of where madness begins is a baffling problem. Doctors know as much about the subject—that is a real analytic knowledge—as a pig does of a holiday. That is why I think a hospital for enfeebled will power should take the place of the ordinary asylum. There the inmate deranged in mind would feel himself under treatment for a curable ailment instead of being branded, indiscriminately, lunatic. Many a man since my asylum days have I met going about his business with peculiarities as singular as the patients I had under my charge, and there were a few among these latter who, if we thought more of humanity than riches, could have been out leading useful commercial lives. Much, in my opinion, might be done in cultivating will power, especially among young people, and guarding them against enervating passions and habits which play havoc with the nerves.

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Books

ART.

THE ART OF ILLUSTRATION. By EDMUND J. SULLIVAN. Chapman and Hall. 25*s.* net.

MR. EDMUND J. SULLIVAN is our most distinguished line-illustrator. He has interpreted many classics, Bunyan, Carlyle, Omar and Tennyson, and he created that book of tragically beautiful cartoons, *The Kaiser's Garland*. Those of us who have enjoyed Mr. Sullivan's subtle draughtsmanship over a period of many years were no less delighted to see that the artist can weave words as delicately or as forcibly as he can arrange lines.

In *The Art of Illustration*, Mr. Sullivan tells us how line-drawing is done, but he confides rather than dictates his knowledge. The author-artist has an amiable manner, and lets us into the secret, without the vaguest hint that he is the master-wizard. His book is not a text-book, full of the author's own works, but an instructive history illuminated with the drawings of others.

Mr. Sullivan holds the opinion that all pictorial art is of necessity illustration. There are some critics who will disagree with him, and a

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few artists who may take umbrage, but it is not easy to grasp the reason of any argument against this view. From the primeval, but none the less refined, drawings on cave walls to the very latest *Punch* picture, the creator has the same end, *i.e.*, the communication of some fact or fancy from one eye to another. Whatever he offers, coming within the scope of vision of human or natural life, however obvious, grotesque, strange, or symbolical, it must be an illustration. A portrait of a beautiful woman is as much illustrative as a drawing of a boxing match.

It was Whistler who started the revolt against the convention of illustrative art as the Victorians understood it from the standpoint of Frith's "Derby Day," and pictures far less interesting and effective. But Whistler, with his nocturnes and symphonies, was in conflict not with illustration but with fashion. There had been innumerable story pictures, and most of these had become bad pictures if good stories. They were created to appeal to sentiment and not to intelligence. The Victorians had attempted to wear the laurels of the poet, the blouse of the artist, and the mantle of the moralist. Whistler was right in demanding that a picture should be sufficient unto itself, that technique and colour must together evoke the requisite æsthetic emotion. Nevertheless, his pictures are illustrations. "Old Battersea Bridge" and the study of Carlyle are nothing if not representative. Whistler may have despised some of his contemporaries, but no one had a greater reverence for Hogarth, the father of English painting and illustration, whose moralisings were always subservient to his technique and sense of truth. Mr. Sullivan makes all this very clear and convincing. His essay, though weighted with knowledge, is balanced with wit, and he never fails of the exact word or simile to convey his thought or intensify his meaning. He discusses lines with the intellectual energy of a connoisseur. They are the notes with which he builds the picture symphony to delight our minds. Thin, thick, curved, straight, cross-hatched—obviously there are none unknown to Mr. Sullivan; he has them all at his finger-tips.

The student particularly will be interested in his chapter on the evolution of reproduction from the wood engraving to the present facsimile process. It is not generally realised now how great a part the engraver played in the art of illustration before photographic reproduction was invented.

The work of many famous artists, Blake, Menzel, Boyd Houghton, Millais, Beardsley, and Phil May, is analysed with much critical charm. The chapter on Phil May is as profound as it is generous and sympathetic, and Mr. Sullivan might well develop and elaborate this into the first authentic biography of his great contemporary and friend.

Though the drawings reproduced are many and diverse, I could have wished that, instead of so many Blakes and Menzels, Mr. Sullivan had included some of his own. If a natural modesty forbade this, since the work does not deal with living artists, could we not have had some of Vierge, the great Spaniard, Daumier, and "Phiz"? A. B.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

A Long Spoon and the Devil. A Parody of the Spoon River Anthology. By Henry Savage. Cecil Palmer. 6*s.* net.

When Edgar Lee Masters wrote *Spoon River* its distinction lay neither

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in literary form nor in language: in spite of the plasticity of the one and the directness of the other its claim is in its subject-matter and the novelty of its conception. When, therefore, in the opening piece of this volume of parodies, Henry Savage concludes his right to poach by confessing, "And besides, it's so damnably easy," we cannot but agree. Happily for our enjoyment of the book he does much more than parody the Anthology. The verses are brilliant with the reflection of many things in modern literature, owing little more than a loose framework to the "leaden Spoon River." Their author is sophisticated, cynical, *blasé*; like his creation, Amelia Perkins, he "knows how many *légumes* make up the vegetable menu at Verray's." He also knows almost everything which has been written, and most things which have been said; moreover, he has things to say on his own account, and when he puts them as subtly as in "Queen Boadicea, M.P.," one recognises the presence of genuine satire.

IMAGES AND IMPRESSIONS. By GEORGE VILLIERS. Painswick.

MR. VILLIERS is best in his most habitual medium, a free verse which is something like rhythmical prose of changing tempo and recurrent swell—a form of unpremeditated spontaneity which puts the breath of life into his transcripts from nature, with just enough consciousness of achievement to give force to his refrain. This vitalised expression and a singular sensitiveness to impressions from without, which echoes with some depth of personal significance in his song, give charm and authenticity to his poetry. His very sensitiveness limits the scope of both image and impression to the timelessly gracious and splendid aspects of nature and the friendly things of life; a choice pleasant enough to the reader, but inhibiting the great note of tragedy and passion, the poet's crowning gift. All that Mr. Villiers gives us is excellently well done. He touches beauty beautifully with suave and unaffected simplicity, but there is a sense of loss in the absence of shadow in his warm and pleasant world of friendly fields, clear seas, and sober loves. Still, the trumpeter who sounds well, with conviction of the splendour and hope of his cause, is also no mean combatant—at least a delight in a sombre world—so who knows! It is for the poet to choose his better part. In this pleasantly done volume "Motor Boat" and the final "Prayer" most fully present Mr. Villiers' very special powers.

FICTION.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF HARRIETT FREAN. By MAY SINCLAIR. Collins. 6*s*. net.

IF this simple sweet story is the sign of a reaction—back to form, to art, to literature, it is highly to be welcomed, but in any case it makes an appeal which is something of an event. In style it is, so to speak, the skeleton of a novel which in other hands would cover twice the number of pages and have ended merely as a novel, but here the method is psycho-analysis. It reminds one of a doctor's case-book. The subject is the life of a girl from the cradle predestined to celibacy, the result partly of Victorian principles and parentage, partly of the ethics of repression which in England have played so stern a part with women. To succeed in a work of this kind constitutes no mean feat, and

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May Sinclair has succeeded both in making her subject interesting and her method fascinating. An extreme simplicity, a charming delicacy, a gift of beauty form of this pathetic outline a picture like an old Dutch painting which lingers in the memory, as ordinary novels do not. In its way it is a little work of art, and strikes a note which will probably be of considerable importance in the literary world.

THE RED SHADOW. By W. L. BLENNERHASSETT. Duckworth. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

A GOOD deal of the fascination which distinguishes Dostoievsky's unwearying pursuit of strange mentalities, and much of the quality of an elaborate State paper, unite in the making of *The Red Shadow*. One hardly knows where fact and fiction join in this remarkably intimate and elaborate study of the Russian revolution, but it is obvious that the major part is history pure and simple—or rather impure and complex—traced with unfaltering clearness and tenacity through the strange story of Roman Ivanovich Kaliajev, the son of the assassin of the Grand Duke Serge.

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